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THE

FAIR ADULTERESS.

A NOVEL.

A

STORY

Founded on Real Facts, and intended
to encourage Virtue, by exposing Vice
in its proper Colours :

Being the Genuine History of the late
Amours of two Persons of the FIRST
RANK.

*Love and Lust essentially divide,
Like Day and Night, Humility and Pride:
One Darkneſs hides, & other does always ſhine,
This of infernal Make, and that divine:
Reason no gen'rous Paſſion does oppoſe,
'Tis Luſt, not Love and Reason that are Foes.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for the AUTHOR, and Sold by W.
BICKERTON, in Temple-Exchange, Fleetſtreet.
MDCCLIV.

THE
FAIR ADULTRESS
A NOVEL
A
STORY

Founded on Real Facts, and intended
to encourage Virtue, by exposing Vice
in its proper Character
Being the Genuine History of the late
Adventures of the Fair
RANK.



For and sold by the Author,
at the Sign of the Gun, in St. Dun-
stons Church-yard, near St. Dun-
stons Church, and at the Sign
of the Gun, in St. Dunstons Church-
yard, near St. Dunstons Church,
and at the Sign of the Gun, in St.
Dunstons Church-yard, near St. Dun-
stons Church.

LONDON:
Printed for the Author, and sold by W.
Bentley, in Strand, near St. Dunstons Church.

THE
Fair Adulterers.

SEASONS that return with fresh Vigour, bring no Comfort to the Distressed; the most beautiful Face of Nature gives no Delight to the Eye that is suffused with Tears: The opening Glades and spreading Lawns are to the Afflicted, a dead and idle Prospect; and all the Melody of Nature's Commoners, that freely range the Woods, afford no Solace to cankering Grief and deep corroding Care; the lovely ASTERIA in vain sought Solitude and Retirement, her Wrongs still
B pursued

pursued her, and tho' she herself was innocent, she suffer'd for the Guilt of Others. How partially are mortal Pleasures distributed! Pale pining Virtue oft sinks forgot, or with its radiant Beams only adorns some homely Cottage, whilst high-rai'd Vice and Folly strut in Robes, and lord it under gilded Roofs in lofty Palaces! Yet Reason, the brightest Emanation of heavenly Light, gives the Disconsolate that innate Succour, that home-felt Transport, which is not to be found in all the glaring Trappings of Pomp and State; the World and all its Joys a-while are open unto Vice, but Gall and deadly Poison succeeds the luscious Banquet; whilst Virtue, feasting on Sighs and Thought, rises with greater Splendour from the Clouds and Mists that vainly strove to obstruct her Way; verifying what the Poet says:

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*The broadest Mirth unmeaning Folly wears,
Less pleasing far than Virtue's verdant Tears.*

THE fair ASTERIA had been a voluntary Exile from the Assemblies of the polite and gay World, above a Month; none could assign a Reason for her abrupt Departure, or why she absented herself from PHILOCELL her Husband, with whom she had for several Years, to all Appearance, lived in the greatest Happiness and Content. The busy talkative Herd who, in their unfriendly fashionable Round of Visits, censure the Monarch with the same Indifference as the Peasant, ever greedy to indulge their Appetite of Scandal, were glad of this Opportunity to vent their Malice, and endeavour to sully the Brightness of that Innocence, which their gloomy dark Ideas could not bear the

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Lustre of; they represented ASTERIA as having been secretly faulty in some Shape or another, and that conscious of her Error, she had prudently chose to withdraw from the Scrutiny, which she was sensible she could not undergo. Alas! What is Fame? or who would be anxious about Reputation, when these Whisperers shall with a Breath destroy the Structure, which has been the Pains of a whole untainted Life to erect? Thus, was the hapless ASTERIA condemned unheard at these tattling Meetings, and not one Friend to plead her Cause, 'till SATHELINDE, an old experienced Visitor, who was generally the first to lead the Cry in this Chace of Defamation, had, by her unwearied Affiduity, partly found out the Cause of her Retirement; however, tho' she was not then arrived at the Particulars, she declared she knew enough to acquit the Lady; and that if there was any Fault in her thus disappearing,

ing,

ing, it arose from too much Fondness, which she still retained for her Husband, who she had great Reason to believe carried on an Intrigue with a certain Lady, very much to his Wife's Prejudice. This turned all their Enquiry into another Channel, and ASTERIA was left to mourn and bewail her cruel Fate at Liesure.

IT is the peculiar Care of Heaven to comfort Innocence and support it under Affliction, and the same disastrous Accident that makes some Persons suffer, shall be the Source of Ease and Happiness to others. The very Elements shall combat in Behalf of the Injured, whilst *Man*, the Substitute of Heaven, sits unconcerned a tame and careless Looker on: It was owing to an odd Accident, produced by the Inclemency of the Weather, that SATHELINDE came by her Intelligence; she had been sent for some few Miles out of Town to visit

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a Daughter-in-Law of hers that was suddenly taken ill, and her Coachman perceiving a violent Storm approaching, persuaded her Ladyship to put up 'till it should be over; and accordingly stop'd at the next House they came to, which was only a little Inn upon the Road. The good Woman of the House made a Thousand Apologies that she could not entertain the Lady in her best Room, because a Gentleman and Lady single-horsed had just came in before upon the same Account as her Ladyship, and had desired that they might not be interrupted by any body whatsoever. SATHELINDE whose Curiosity was excited by this, and wanting more to know who the Company were, than any particular Desire she had to be in that Room, seemed to be very angry with the Woman, telling her, that she put an Affront upon her, for that she did not believe there was any body there; and that
her

her Son, who lived but five Miles from her, should resent this Insult. The poor Woman very much terrified at this, as knowing her Guest to be very haughty and imperious, endeavoured all she could to pacify her, assuring her that she did not know the Gentleman and Lady, but judged that by their Appearance they could be of no indifferent Rank, but to oblige her Ladyship she would beg the Favour of them to walk up Stairs, and quit the Parlour to her.----- This was certainly a very odd Request, and would have been attended with some Difficulty, but the Gentleman hearing SATHELINDE's Voice, which he was very well acquainted with, was as desirous of avoiding her as she could be of seeing him; and calling the Woman of the House, gave her no Time to make an Apology, but complaining that the Room was damp, and might give the Lady cold, desired her to shew them into some other where

they

B 4

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they might sit 'till the Storm was over, which then was grown very violent. The Woman's Heart jump'd for Joy to hear him make such a Request, and very obsequiously she led them up Stairs; SATHELINDE was upon the Watch to see if she knew them, but he turn'd himself in such a Manner that she could not distinguish his Face, and as to the Lady she wore a Mask. She could scarce brook this Disappointment, and especially as she thought by their Stature and Air that she knew something of them; however she stifled her Curiosity as well as she could till she was shewn into the Parlour, when calling for her Footman, she enquired of him if there were any Servants waiting on the Gentleman and Lady, and if he knew whose they were; The Fellow informed her there was only a Boy with them, and that he had asked him, as was customary on those Oc-
ca-

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casions, whom he belonged to? But could get no other Answer than “to his Master.” Or to where he lived?—“Why! where do you think, but at Home.” And that as to the Livery he could make nothing of it, for it was but a plain riding Frock.

THE curious Lady sat down very much chagrined that she could not discover who they were, rightly apprehending that there was something more than ordinary in it, because they were so cautious of her seeing their Faces. And she was ruminating on this, inventing a thousand several Ways to come at the Knowledge of this Affair, when turning her Head towards that Part of the Room where they had chanced to sit, she espied a Paper on the Ground, which seem'd as if it had been carelessly dropp'd out of a Pocket, and eagerly snatching it up, she no sooner saw it, than she knew the
Hand,

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Hand, and immediately conjectured the Gentleman whom she had seen to be PHILOCELL, the Husband of ASTERIA; but the Billet she could not tell what to make of; for as there was no Supercription on it, she could not think it had ever been made use of, unless it was the Copy, or rough Draught of a Letter which he either had sent, or intended to send to some body; and which upon Perusal she found to be as follows:

MADAM,

“ **T**HE Pride and Haughtiness
 “ with which you treat
 “ me, upon the bare Merit of your
 “ Virtue, is insupportable: Do you
 “ imagine that worn out Character-
 “ istic alone would over-balance
 “ all Defects? You are to remem-
 “ ber too that there is much more
 “ Latitude allowed to a Man than
 “ a Woman; and, for my part, I
 “ shall

“ shall make use of the Prerogative
“ of my Sex, and prefer the kind
“ agreeable Woman that meets my
“ Embraces without Reserve, to her
“ who entertains me with nothing
“ but Sighs, Tears and Reproaches.
“ I am informed by your Woman
“ that you intend to retire into the
“ Country; Solitude will, perhaps,
“ bring you to a right Way of think-
“ ing: In the mean time do you
“ endeavour to be as virtuous, as I
“ will happy. But I must assure you
“ of this, that you have placed your
“ Suspicions very wrong, and your
“ upbraiding me with what I never
“ deserved or pursued, has given me
“ an Inclination to try what Joys
“ your Sex have in Store--When you
“ come to your Senses let me hear
“ from you.”

OH! the Monster, says SATHE-
LINDE, he openly avows his Villany,
this

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this is certainly a Copy of a Letter which PHILOCELL has sent to his Wife, and poor ASTERIA whose Reputation has been fate upon for this Week past by the whole polite Female Inquest is innocent. Oh ! that I could but discover who is this Paramour of his, added she, this Paper is a little mysterious, but some time or other perhaps it may be of Service.

SHE was walking backwards and forwards about the Room in more Agitation at this Thing which did not concern her, than at her Daughter's Danger, and was upon the Point of openly attacking PHILOCELL, like an incensed Fury, when the Storm being abated, she saw him and the Lady coming down to take Horse, she stood at the Door purposely that they might see her, but notwithstanding all her busy Care she could not discover the Lady, so that they went off very quietly, and SATHELINDE pursued her Journey

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ney divided between Joy for that Part of the Discovery she had made, and Grief that she could not attain at more.

SATHELINDE, so soon as she came to Town, posted to the Assembly with the utmost Impatience, and shewing them the Paper she had found, refus'd to name Names, as she said, but gave broad Hints enough for them to understand whom she meant by the Gentleman; and describing the Lady, their little Wits were put upon the Rack to find her out, the whole Circle of their Acquaintance was run over in a few Minutes to examine who nearest resembled the Description given of her in Stature and Shape, but after a long Research they were obliged to desist and sit down where they began: Though as this had excited the Curiosity of so many inquisitive Women, it was morally imposible the Affair should long remain a Secret.

ALTHO

ALTHO' the Ladies that frequent these Assemblies generally admit none of the male Kind into their Conversation, but Fops and Effeminate Coxcombs, yet some times they soar a higher Pitch and suffer a Man of Sense to entertain them; of this last Stamp was TIMOLEO, one who to a penetrating Genius which rendered him agreeable Company to those of his own Sex, who were endow'd with the most exalted Sense, had a peculiar Softness and Elegance that could not fail of captivating the Fair. He was intimate, not only in the Family of PHILOCELL and ASTERIA but several others of the first Rank, which gave him free Admission every where, besides that he was a Favourite of the Muses which without any other Accomplishment is a sufficient Recommendation to every Woman of Taste; he had for some Time past wonder'd at the strange Alteration he had observed in PHILOCELL, and particularly

larly that he had not seen his Lady, who being naturally of an easy Disposition, more inclined to Mirth than Sadness used frequently to join in their innocent Diversions. He had heard she was gone out of Town, but Nobody could assign the Reason why ; the Respect and Esteem he bore her, made him very much concerned at this Accident, which notwithstanding his Intimacy with her Husband, he durst not be too pressing to know the Meaning of, but he happen'd to pay a Visit to SATHELINDE who acquainting him with the strange Adventure she had met with at the Inn, unravelled the Mystery, and left him no longer in Doubt of the Occasion of ASTERIA's sudden Departure ; and though his Friendship would have induced him readily to offer her all the Assistance in his Power to accommodate Matters between her Husband and her, yet as they were intirely ignorant of the Place she had made

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made Choice of for her Solitude, TRIMOLEO as well as the curious Ladies was still left in Suspense, and obliged to wait for a more favourable Opportunity to testify how much they shared in her Distress.

'Twas in that verdant Season of the Year when renovating Nature puts forth each Beauty that can charm the Eye or delight the Heart, the hoary Winter withdrew, and made Room for the approaching Spring; the oozy River glitter'd beneath an unclouded Sun, at the same Time that its Banks retained the Verdure of refreshing Showers; the Gardens offered their first Nofegays; the Trees, like new Acquaintance brought happily together, were stretching their Arms to meet each other, and growing nearer and nearer every Hour, whilst the Birds were paying their thanksgiving Songs for the new Habitations which Nature had formed them. These
plea-

pleasing Prospects, irksome only to the Melancholy and the Pensive, invited the Gay and Frolicksome forth to roam, and the Weather continuing milder for several Days than was usual even at that Time of Year, SATHELINDE proposed to TIMOLEO and several other Gentlemen and Ladies, to make a Party of Pleasure to go a few Miles up the River : This was readily assented to, and the next Morning appointed for setting out on their little Voyage, SATHELINDE selected Six Couple from among her Acquaintance, of those which she thought would be most gay and least reserved, designing to visit her Country Villa with them, and spend best Part of the next Night in Dancing : the Beau-monde was ready at her Summons, as she had chose a Sett of the brightest Beauties that could attract them ; TIMOLEO as generally on those Occasions was appointed Master of the Ceremonies, they sailed slowly
C up

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up the silver Stream for some Hours, passing the Time in agreeable Mirth and witty Repartees, and diverting themselves with the Prospects the Country afforded them, and the Variety of odd Company which passed them in several Boats, and represented on the Surface almost as many different Species as are concealed beneath the Bosom of the watry Element, till it was almost Noon. The Sun which was but just high enough above the Horizon to afford a gentle Warmth, free from those scorching Heats which his brighter Beams sometimes occasion, invited them to lie by on the shining fluid Plain, and take some Refreshment.

WHILST they were in the very Height of their Repaste, their Attention was suddenly engaged by the Appearance of a Barge ornamented in a most superb Manner, but which plough'd the gently rolling Stream so fast

fast that they had no Liefure to observe the various Richness of the Carving, and Elegance of the Painting. All they could discover as she pass'd by them was owing to the Wind's fanning aside a Crimson Curtain, by which Accident they perceived a Gentleman and a Lady in it alone; the Gentleman's Back was towards them, and was leaning upon his Arm in the Lady's Lap, as if he were lost in Adoration of her Beauty, whilst she sat in all the Pride of State; triumphant in her Charms; and with a pleasing Smile seemed to approve the Homage he paid her. Though the Barge pass'd swiftly by them they had a full View of her Face, which one of the Gentlemen who was more particularly acquainted with her, discovered at the first Blush though none of the Ladies in SATHELINDE'S Company were entire Strangers to her.

COUNT CAROVILLE, for that was the Gentleman's Name, had made his Respects to the Lady as the Barge failed by them, to which she had made no Return but scornfully turned away; SATHELINDE thought she knew her, and as People of her inquisitive Temper, who are always upon the Catch, generally guess Right upon any Emergency of that Kind, she imagined it was the same Lady whom she had seen but a few Days before at the Inn, when she went to pay a Visit to her Daughter in Law: She was all on Fire to be ascertained of this, concluding if it was she, that her Companion must needs be PHILOCCELL. Persons of her Stamp form Surmises from the slenderest Appearances, and are commonly ready enough to pass their own Conjectures for positive Facts, they take as much or more Joy in the Discovery or Disappointment of an Intrigue than of-
ten-

tentimes the happy Lovers do in the soft Moments they enjoy together; so that if by their Whispers and Censures they keep any one chaste, it is more out of Spite and Malice than any Care for the Person's Reputation, or any Esteem they have for Virtue; yet it must be owned that Scandal is of Use to the Public, as it prevents the too great Increase of wanton Amours, and is therefore an Antidote to Lust, as one Poison sometimes expells another, and these severe Ladies are as much to be thanked for convicting the Vicious, as the SPIDER is for fighting with, and destroying the TOAD.

SATHELINDE would have been glad of venting her whole Stock of Spleen at once, but as she was not yet privy to Facts enough to make them sufficiently ridiculous she thought it would be best to dissemble her Suspicion of this being PHILOCELL'S Mistress, and try if she could find out

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from CAROVILLE who the Lady was, which would give her greater Scope to proceed: Pursuant to this Resolution, she tapp'd the Count on the Shoulder, in a free Manner.-----

“ Courage, Monsieur, says she, what
 “ is a Cavalier of your Spirit and Ad-
 “ dress with the Ladies, to be dash'd
 “ at such a trifling Slight as this:
 “ Come, come, chear up and don't
 “ be melancholy, it may be your
 “ Turn to be the happy Man, the
 “ next Time the Lady indulges her
 “ Passions in such a pleasant Voyage.”

“ You talk mysteriously, Madam,
 “ replies the Count, and I am really
 “ at a Loss to find out your Meaning,
 “ your bidding me be chearful is an
 “ unnecessary Command, for were I
 “ ever so inclineable to Melancholy,
 “ it would be impossible to be dull
 “ in such agreeable Company.”-----

“ See, see, Ladies, (says SATHE-
 “ LINDE turning to the Company,)
 “ only observe his Countenance, the
 “ poor

“ poor Gentleman is grown a down-
“ right Inamorato, and because
“ the Goddess of his Desires is not
“ with him, he is willing to keep
“ himself employ’d, and is practising
“ his Compliments upon us.” -----

“ This is still a Mystery, Madam,
“ added CAROVILLE, but since I
“ am to furnish you Diversion as a
“ disappointed Lover, I shall be ve-
“ ry glad to contribute to your Mirth,
“ if you will only please to let me
“ know who is the cruel Fair one
“ that thus tyrannizes over my cre-
“ dulous Affections.” ----- “ That’s
“ very pleasant indeed, continued
“ SATHELINDE, as if we could not
“ all perceive, that the Lady in the
“ Barge has thrown a Cloud over
“ that Mirth and Pleasure which be-
“ fore shone in your Eyes : Come,
“ come, Count, you may allow me,
“ who have seen more Years than
“ any of you, to judge of the In-
“ difference a Lady puts on, when
“ she

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“ she is saluted by her Lover, and
 “ his happier Rival is in her Pre-
 “ sence; I could perceive a certain
 “ Mixture of Surprize and Disdain,
 “ when you paid your Obeisance to
 “ her, and at the same Time ob-
 “ served no small Astonishment in
 “ you.” ----- “ You might perhaps
 “ discover, Madam, added the Count,
 “ those various Passions in us both,
 “ which you mention; yet I do as-
 “ sure you they are not to be attri-
 “ buted to the Cause you would as-
 “ sign for them; if I was astonished,
 “ it was to see that Lady appear thus
 “ publickly after the Liberties she
 “ had given the World to talk censo-
 “ riously of her; and if she was sur-
 “ prized it was to see me, who by
 “ being acquainted with her injured
 “ Lord, she knew, had great Reason
 “ to imagine that she was in Company
 “ she should not be, and would not
 “ care to have known: These are the
 “ true Causes of our different Emo-
 “ tions,

“ tions, and you will be the more
“ readily inclined to believe me,
“ when I inform you that the Lady
“ we saw is no other than the cele-
“ brated LIBERTINA, the gay roving
“ Wife of the impotent unhappy
“ DON DANDIN.” ----- “ Dear
“ Count, says SATHELINDE, I beg
“ ten thousand Pardons for having
“ fixed you amongst the Rank of dull
“ doating despairing Lovers, how
“ could I think that a Man of your
“ Life and Spirit would ever submit
“ to be walked in Trammels? But I
“ hope you will excuse it, and
“ since you inform us, that you are
“ acquainted with her Husband, you
“ may possibly give us some Account
“ of this famous Toast, LIBERTINA,
“ whom I have often heard mention’d
“ in Polite Assemblies, as one whose
“ Adventures would afford Enter-
“ tainment to the Curious; it will
“ divert us as we pursue our intended
“ Voyage, and I hope will not be
“ dis-

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“disagreeable to the Rest of the
“Company.”

THE Rest of them joined in SATHELINDE'S Request, and Count CAROVILLE, after making several Apologies for his Inability to undertake such a Task, and informing them that he was only acquainted with her in her younger Days, and that since her Marriage, the Dignity she was elevated to, made her assume a Haughtiness to all who were not of equal Rank with her; unless some of the vulgar Sort whom she distinguished by her Amours; begg'd them to excuse his breaking off abruptly in his Narration, where his Personal Knowledge of her Actions failed; which the Company gladly complied with, and the Count proceeded as follows:

T H E

* * * * *

THE
HISTORY of *Libertina*,

Till the Time of her Marriage with

DON DANDIN.

THE Indulgence of Parents is too often the Ruin of their most favourite Children, and their Over-fondness, is not only the Source of all their vicious Proceedings, but the Misfortunes that must necessarily ensue from them, LIBERTINA OWES all her Errors in Life to the mistaken Tenderness of her Parents; her Father, the Count MORESCUE, was immensely rich, and having no Child but her to inherit his vast Possessions, was doatingly fond of her, even in her Infancy, and would not suffer her In-
cli-

clinations to be thwarted in the least, at a Time when the Mind is most apt to receive any Impressions, either of Good or Ill; so that LIBERTINA, was born and bred up with an utter Aversion to all Manner of Constraint, and being accustomed to converse with none, but the Servants, imagined all the World like them were born to be her Slaves; and by their Obsequiousness to oblige her, and the Freedom she enjoyed in her Discourse amongst them, gave her an early Relish of their Diversion, and taught her to imbibe a Hatred for any Thing of a higher Degree, which she was learned to treat as stiff and formal. Her Father, who was an honest downright Man, of plain Sense, was contented to bound his Knowledge with the Art of getting Money, and managing his Worldly Affairs with Care, without ever aiming to aspire to the lofty Heights of refined Sense; and thought sufficient that his Wife

LAURA

LAURA was ranked amongst the most distinguished of the FEMMES SCAVANTES: This occasioned an odd Medley of Visitants at their several Levees; and whilst the Count's Antichamber was fill'd with People of plain plodding Faces and Heads turned for Business; nothing was heard at LAURA'S Toilette but witty Repartees, soft sighing Love-Odes, or the newest Scandal. She assumed her very Name in Imitation of the Mistress of the famous PETRARCH; the Poets acknowledged themselves as her Votaries in all their Pieces, and not only their Poems were full of her Praises, but even their Letters and more private Pieces; her most minute Actions were recorded by them, she could not go out of Town but the Muses attended her, and formed the ARCADIAN Fields or TEMPE'S Grove wherever she went: In short, she was the darling Subject of their Pens, of which the following is a Specimen

men, where one of these complaisant Bards describes her Town Life. "LAURA, says he, from having
" rusticated in your Company really
" behaves too long herself scanda-
" lously amongst us: She pretends
" to open her Eyes for the Sake of
" seeing the Sun, and to sleep be-
" cause it is Night; drinks Tea at
" Nine in the Morning, and is
" thought to have said her Prayers
" before; and talks without any
" Manner of Shame of good Books.
" I rejoiced the other Day to see a
" Libel on her Toilette which gives
" me some Hope that you have at
" least a Taste of Scandal left you in
" Defect of all other Vices." It is
no Wonder, that Miss who inherited
all her Mother's Fire and Vivacity,
and as soon as she could understand
any thing, was told that her Father's
Money was to accompany it, should
follow the Example that was set her,
and arrogate the Manner of an ex-
tra-

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traordinary Genius; she was treated accordingly, and whatever Miss said, was ecchoed by the Servants as the wittiest Expressions that ever came out of the Mouth of a Child.

SHE was thus training up in a fair Way to be conceited, gay, and gallant, when the old Count MORESCUE died, having first settled his Fortune, and left his Wife, not only a rich Widow, but the Care of LIBERTINA, whose Estate intitled her to be reckoned the richest Heiress in the Kingdom; which he had left under such Restrictions that whatever Man she should marry, could be but little the better for it; and to this was owing most of the Liberties she has since taken in Life; for it is this pernicious Custom that occasions so many unhappy Matches, and renders the Matrimonial Union a State of perpetual Jarring and Discontent by leaving the Wife independant of her Husband, who

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who grows less careful of her Conduct than she otherwise would be, because she knows that if she suffers for any Failing, it can be only in Reputation, and not Substance; and few Ladies are so squeamish in this Age, as not to prefer State and Equipage to any Character the World may give them.

AFTER the Death of her Father, the young Lady became more immediately her Mother's Companion, as being then old enough to visit with her wherever she went, and some will not scruple to say, that her Mother took her thus about with her to screen some Frailties that she could not avoid; for Wit and Gaiety are most commonly inseparable Companions, and LAURA having a great Stock of the former, it is not to be supposed, that she was deficient in the latter; you may term it Artifice, or what you please, to keep Lovers in Suspence, but it is certain that

LAURA

L A U R A had many Admirers, which she still kept in Pursuit of her, by allowing them some trifling Favours, but with-holding the principal One. As she was a profess'd Wit herself, it is therefore no Wonder that her Acquaintance were all of the same Sort; they paid their Homage to the Mother by addressing themselves to the Daughter, as a reigning Favourite; they employ'd all their Flights of Poetry, and all the Eloquence they had to dress up this new Beauty.—— Though one of them, in an Epistle to a Friend, cannot help giving a Hint that these divine Creatures had a Spice of Mortality about them, for speaking of L A U R A, and wishing himself in the Country with her, he breaks forth in a Rapture, and says, that he values a short Letter from her as the Glimpse of a Vision afforded to some devout Hermit; for including, as those Revelations do, a Promise of a better Life in the *Elysian*
D Groves

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Groves of her Villa; whither, he says, he could almost pray in the Stile of a Sermon, *The Lord bring us all, &c.* Thither, continues he, may we tend by various Ways to one blisful Bower; thither, may Health, Peace and good Humour, wait upon us as Associates; thither may whole Car-goes of Nectar, Liquor of Life and Longevity, by Mortals call'd *Sparw Water*, be convey'd! There, as MIL-TON has it, may we like the Dei-ties;

*On Flow'rs repos'd, and with fresh
Garlands crown'd
Quaff Immortality and Joy!—*

Thus far he describes their Diversions pursuant to the Plan laid down of the Golden Age, but is conscious to him-self that amidst all these refined Plea-sures, some human Frailty would creep in, and therefore acquaints the same Friend that he hopes one Day
to

to try, if LAURA lives as well as he does, tho' he much questions whether she can live as quietly; for, I suspect, says he, the Bells will be ringing at her Arrival, and on her own and LIBERTINA'S Birth-day, and that all the Clergy in the Country will come, and pay their Respects; both the Clergy and the Bells expecting from her, and from the young Lady further Business, and further Employment.

NOR was her Person only the Theme of their Adulations, but her Judgment and Sense were exalted above those who were three times her Age; for, speaking how far the Pleasures of the Country transcend those of the Town, and persuading them to continue there, I appeal to her, if you are not every Soul of your better People, better Companions, and happier where you are? I desire her Opinion under her Hand in your next

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Letter, I mean LIBERTINA.—I am confident, if she would or durst speak her Sense, and employ that Reasoning, which God has given her, to infuse more Thoughtfulness in you all, her Arguments could not fail to put you to the Blush, and keep you out of Town, like People sensible of their own Felicities.

THUS was she flatter'd, thus admired when scarce above the Age that other young Ladies are put to their Sampler: She had indeed something to recommend her, for she mightily affected the Airs of a Woman, and hated any Thing that looked childish, when other Misses were contriving how to adorn and ornament their artificial Babies, she was thinking of nothing but the Joys that must arise from procuring real Ones. She over and over in her Heart, applied to herself all the fine Things that were said to her Mam-
ma,

ma, and eagerly longing to have the same address'd to her, began to be a little Coquet before she was Fourteen Years of Age, and whether it was her natural Temper, or Want of Experience, I can't determine, but she soon made every Body acquainted with her amorous Disposition; the first that made any Impression on her Heart, was a young Fellow who taught her to dance. She thought him the most charming Man she had ever beheld; and the young Monsieur had certainly gained her Affections intirely, had he given the least Encouragement to her extravagant Passion; but, on the contrary, when she practis'd on him the soft Languishments and Roll of the Eye, which she had studied at her Glass, he treated them with Indifference, and at least grew quite disagreeable to her, by always calling her Child, and little Miss. And her Forwardness being perceiv'd in the Family,

D 3

she

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she was severely taken to Task, and sent out of the Way.

BUT what contributed greatly to make her despise him, was a new Flame, which BENITO her Mother's Footman had rais'd in her Breast. This Fellow was the very Fop and Fiddle of the Family, he was ignorant and silly enough, to recommend him to the Esteem of any Woman; his Person was tolerable, and he was so perfect a Master of Dress that had it not been for his nasty Livery, Miss thought he would by far outshine any of the Beaux that frequented their House; How ever censorious People might be from an handsome genteel Footman's living with a brisk Widow, it is certain Miss was in more Danger from BENITO than her Mamma. He sung well, play'd upon the Fiddle, and was the chief Man they had in Country Dances; which Miss was extremely fond of; and

and was never happier than when she could give her Mamma the Slip, and get amongst the Servants at that Diversion: She always took Care to have BENITO for her Partner; and as the natural Turns and Variations of the Dance, gave her an Opportunity to lay hold of his Hands, she would press them with an Extacy which he could not but perceive; and in Return he prais'd her easy Shape and Motion, and would often tell her that she was grown quite a Woman; LIBERTINA was scarce able to contain herself at these Adulations, and once in the Warmth of her Imagination, cried out, that she thought her Mother was highly to blame to let such a pretty Fellow wear a Livery; but if ever she came to be her own Mistress, he should throw off the nasty Dress, and do no menial Offices, but only attend her Person. This pert Speech gave BENITO a plain Hint, that his Addresses would

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not be badly received, he now took more than ordinary Care in adorning his Person, and was always ready to attend on Miss, and offer her all the little Services in his Power. By the Liberty of the Footman's Gallery he had acquired a tolerable Knack at repeating Parts of Plays, and could make shift to read a Poem pretty well, but he could hum a Tune much better, and fired with the Conceit of his own Abilities he would sometimes take a bold Flight, and venture at composing a Stanza: ---- Miss, who had entertained a very romantic Notion, when they were in the Country, used to spend whole Afternoons with BENITO in reading Romances, and such idle Trash, which poison the Minds of most of the young Ladies of the Age; he took the Opportunity, whenever he came to any amorous Speeches which those heroic Lovers address'd to their Mistresses, to point them more particularly

ticularly to LIBERTINA; and whenever he did so, he could observe her Eyes brighten up, and glow with warm Desire; frequent Sighs would ensue, and he could plainly perceive, that he made some tender Impressions on Miss's Heart: He therefore resolved to push Fortune whilst she was in the Mood, and to find out some Means to make an open Declaration of his Love, that he might understand her Sentiments more freely from her Speech than he could from dumb Signs and Tokens; accordingly he wrote an Epistle in the proper Form of Romance, which he determin'd to drop in her Presence the first Opportunity that should offer; the Deities were propitious to their Votary, and did not let him sigh long in vain; LIBERTINA grew so fond of BENITO's Company, that she was quite uneasy without him; but growing wiser since the Reprimand she received on the Dancing Master's Account,

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count, she found out proper Excuses for concealing her Inclination; and all of a sudden grew very fond of Fishing, at which melancholy Diversion BENITO was always order'd to attend her. The Place she chose for this Amusement was by a little purling Rivulet, the Banks of which were shelter'd from the Inclemency of the Weather by a thick Wood: The Situation of it seem'd form'd to inspire Love and soft Sentiments: The pleasing Murmurs lull'd her into a Kind of amorous Lethargy, and the Zephyrs breathing through the Trees aided her rising Sighs: She was in one of these Reveries, and in those soft Moments when Love finds an easy Access to the Heart, when BENITO took an Opportunity to throw his passionate Epistle in her Way; he dropp'd it near her as she sat fishing, and retired to some Distance to see whether she took any Notice of it, and with a great deal of Pleasure per-

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perceiv'd her snatch it up eagerly,
but it is almost impossible to describe
the different Emotions of Hope and
Fear which he felt whilst she was
reading the following Lines:

To the most ADORABLE of
Her S E X.

Divine Fair One,

“ **T**HE Gods themselves have
“ condescended to put on
“ various Shapes to shew the Esteem
“ they had for Beauty, and who that
“ has beheld you would not quit the
“ Empyrean Plains to be bless'd in a
“ Cottage with you! Fearful I am
“ of offending, and every Moment
“ of my Life curse the Cruelty of my
“ Fate that has put me in a Condi-
“ tion daily to behold those Charms,
“ which

“ which it is impossible to see with-
“ out secretly fighting and languish-
“ ing for; yet by the Partiality of
“ its Favours has render’d me desti-
“ tute of the State and Grandeur
“ that are requisite to address her as
“ I ought: O! how happy were
“ the Times of Innocence, when
“ youthful Shepherdesses undazzled
“ by the Lustre of destructive Gold,
“ listen’d with Pleasure to their Lo-
“ vers artless Tales, and gave him
“ such Returns as Modesty would
“ permit without a Blush; but oh!
“ celestial Beauty! the Anxiety and
“ Torment I endure can no longer
“ be smother’d! Your Charms have
“ pierc’d my Heart: I love you
“ with a Passion the most pure and
“ untainted that ever Mortal was in-
“ spired with! You may perhaps
“ receive this Declaration with In-
“ dignity, but an irresistible Impulse
“ urges me to throw myself at your
“ Feet, then either bid me live by
“ one

“ one kind Smile, or with a Frown
“ fix the Doom of your

Devoted ADMIRER.

LIBERTINA had no sooner read the Letter than she concluded it was address'd to her : “ But how artful-
“ ly, says she, to herself, has the
“ Fellow cook'd it up ! Then here
“ is no Name signed to it, nor any
“ Direction, but what every Woman
“ in the Kingdom would be as apt
“ to apply to herself as I am, so that
“ if I am angry at it, he may say it
“ was only a rough Scroll which ac-
“ cidentally dropt out of his Pocket,
“ and was address'd to Nobody in
“ particular. This is very mysteri-
“ ous and pretty Sport, added she,
“ and really upon Reflection I don't
“ know whether I had best be angry
“ or pleas'd ? ”

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THE young Coquet continued some Time in this wavering Disposition, when Love at length got the better. Her Pride was a little piqu'd at first to think she should settle her Affections on One that was but her Mother's menial Servant : However, the Agreeableness of his Person, and several other Qualifications which that soft Passion had taught her to find out in him soon over-ballanc'd all Scruples, and she determin'd to let him know, by some Means or other, that she had seen his Letter: After proposing several Methods to herself, she at last resolv'd to leave the Paper where she found it, because she imagin'd he had not seen her take it up, but first she took out her Pencil, and wrote upon the Back of it.

Poor

Poor wretched Lover,

“ **W** Hsoever thou art, or to
“ what innocent Nymph
“ thy passionate Epistle is design’d,
“ may the Gods of Love hear thy
“ Suit, and be propitious to thy
“ Flame! May thy Mistress reward
“ thee with a due Acknowledgment
“ for thy proffer’d Service; for
“ where the Heart is sincere, and
“ the Affections rightly plac’d, State
“ and Grandeur are of no Consequence.”

HAVING done this, she quitted the Place where she was fishing, and went to where BENITO was trembling to know the Event of his Billet-doux. She took no Notice of what had pass’d, but told him, that she perceiv’d there would not be much Sport that Day; and therefore she
would

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would stay no longer; and leaving her Fishing-Tackle with him, she walked gently homewards. BENITO thought she seem'd very much out of Humour, and therefore imagined he had met with no Success, and was confirm'd in his Opinion when he saw the Paper lie on the Ground; he took it up almost in Despair, but was agreeably surpriz'd to find the Marks of her dear Hand on the Back. He could through the distant Wish for his Success, see that his Addresses would claim a particular Regard from her. He followed her as fast as he could, but she was got home before him, and what perplexed him very much was, that notwithstanding the flattering Hopes he had entertain'd, she seem'd to take less Notice of him than before; and he had not so much as an Opportunity of speaking to her alone for three or four Days, but LIBERTINA could no longer refrain from the De-
light

light she took in his Company, and the Fineness of the Weather favouring her Design, she order'd BENITO to be ready early the next Morning to accompany her to the Wood to take her usual Diverſion: He did not fail to obey her Commands, and by Break of Day ſhe reach'd the wiſh'd for Place, which Fortune ſeem'd to have pointed out as the Spot of his Happineſs. She was then leſs reſerved to him than ſhe had been for ſome Time paſt, and made herſelf very merry with jeering him about his ſorrowful Countenance and telling him, that ſhe believ'd he was in Love: And he, at the ſame Time, gave her to underſtand that if he was ſo, it was cruel in her to ſport with the Pain which ſhe herſelf had given him.

AN Accident happen'd this Time which endear'd BENITO to her more than ever, and entirely fix'd
E her

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her Affections on him. She chose her Situation where the Bank rose a considerable Height from the Water, and where the Stream being deepest she thought it would afford her the most Diversion. BENITO was higher up, and she had sat there for near Half an Hour, when he heard her scream out, and running to see what was the Matter, perceiv'd her struggling in the Water; for being too careless of herself and eager after her Sport, she had over-reach'd herself in striving to get up a Fish she had hook'd, and by that Means fell into the River. BENITO immediately leap'd in after her, and swimming down the Current to her, luckily caught her by the Arm just as the Eddy had drawn her in, and she was almost ready to sink. He waded with her to the Bank where the Pleasure he receiv'd, in lifting her up, sufficiently recompenced the Pains he had taken; for the

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the rude Stream. by floating up her Cloaths, had left all her lovely Limbs expos'd to his eager Grasp, and which Spite of the Danger she was in, at every Touch, thrill'd him to the Soul, nor could she be angry at the Liberty he took, since her Preservation required it.

BENITO at last got her safe on Shore, and brought her to herself, though she was extremely frighten'd at the Danger she had undergone; and not judging it proper to go home in the wet Condition she then was, BENITO took her to a Miller's House that was about a Quarter of a Mile up the River, and there committed her to the Care of the Good Woman of the House, who very readily granted her all the Assistance in her Power. When she was a little refresh'd, she call'd for her trusty Servant to pay her Acknowledgments for the timely Succour he had af-

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forded her: When he enter'd the Room she could not help blushing to think of the Liberty his roving Hands had taken in the late Adventure, but having recover'd her Confusion a little, when they were alone, she order'd him to sit down by her, and began speaking: " BENITO, " said she, your Care of me upon " this Emergency, and your ventur- " ing, even at the Risque of your " own Life, to save mine, convinces " me that there is some Motive more " than the bare Duty you owe me, " which has induced you to do what " you have done: I should therefore " be glad to know your real Senti- " ments upon this Head, and to en- " courage you to proceed, be assur'd " that State and Grandeur makes no " Difference between you and me; " and if the Letter you dropp'd, " was design'd to express the Dic- " tates of your Heart, which a mi- " staken Bashfulness would not suffer " you

“ you to convey to me in any other
“ Manner. It may perhaps require
“ a more particular and passionate
“ Answer than what was wrote on
“ on the Back of it.”

“ MADAM, replied BENITO,
“ what you have now said, and the
“ Kindness you have always shew'd
“ me, has made such a strong Im-
“ pression on my Mind that I real-
“ ly want Words to express how
“ much I love you. Fancy with
“ yourself what Transports and Rap-
“ tures an ardent Passion, a just Re-
“ sentment of Favours, and the de-
“ lightful Pleasure of being beloved
“ by one of the most amiable Per-
“ sons on Earth, can raise in a Heart
“ that is sensible, tender and deli-
“ cate; and then you will have
“ some small Image of what I feel
“ for you. Never Man loved as I
“ do, and I am in the utmost Im-
“ patience to give you some essential

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“ Tokens of it, and by your present
 “ Indulgence, hope you will receive
 “ this Declaration candidly: Did you
 “ but know how this Hope charms
 “ me, and what Sentiments of Joy
 “ it excites in my Soul, you would
 “ be fully convinc’d that I merit all
 “ your Love.”

“ I CAN’T say, replied LIBER-
 “ TINA, that this Declaration is at
 “ all disagreeable to me; but what
 “ would you have me do, I am sen-
 “ sible that L A U R A and all my
 “ Friends would be extremely irri-
 “ tated, were they to know that I
 “ permit myself to give Ear to any
 “ Overtures of this Kind from you;
 “ yet I find myself forc’d by an ir-
 “ resistible Power to love you, and
 “ am bound to follow the Influence
 “ of my Stars: My Reason tells me
 “ sufficiently that I do wrong, but
 “ my Heart persuades me that I am
 “ in the Right; ’tis not in our Pow-
 “ er

“ er to love Nothing but what we
“ should : The Motives of Interest,
“ of Gratitude, and of Fear, are but
“ feeble Arms to resist the Force of
“ Love, and a Woman possess’d
“ with a violent Passion is in no
“ Condition to listen to those Rules
“ of Duty, Decency, and Custom,
“ wherewith Mankind desire to en-
“ slave us.”

BENITO by this being convinced that she entertained no unfavourable Sentiments of him, could not refrain from shewing the Joy and Transport that glow’d in his Breast, and embrac’d her tenderly several times: She receiv’d these Expressions of his Kindness with a reciprocal Affection, and from this Moment commenced an Amour which hath since very much redounded to her Disgrace, and which LAURA is likewise very much blam’d for, as suffering her Daughter, an Heiress of such

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prodigious Fortune, to keep such Company as would not suffer her to entertain a Passion for any Thing higher than a common Lacquey; but the young Lady found so many Charms in his Conversation that she had no Thoughts of aspiring to a higher Degree in Life: She could, at that Time, have been very well contented to have been his Wife, and in all Probability if she had, it would have prevented that roving Disposition from getting the better of her, which she has since convinc'd the World, is the ruling Passion of her Soul.

THE amorous Footman, who had gain'd the Summit of his Wishes, determin'd, as he had proceeded thus far, to make a compleat Conquest: In order to do which, he had just Sense enough to find out that it was necessary to keep the Affair as secret as possible, and making her acquainted with his Opinion, he propos'd,
for

for the future, that they should appear as indifferent to each other before Folks, as if nothing had ever pass'd between them, and that all the Correspondence they should carry on should be by Writing, under the feign'd Names of PARIS and ÆNONE.

THIS romantic Scheme pleas'd LIBERTINA mightily, and therefore she readily came into it: They wasted the best Part of the Day in amorous Toyings and Follies, when the Miller's Wife, having dried her Cloaths, the young Lady and her Spark thought it was high Time for them to go home. LAURA was surpriz'd at her staying out so long, but being better engag'd herself, had not sent any Body to see for her, and the two Lovers not caring to tell all the Particulars of her falling into the River least it should prevent their going so often, and so deprive them of the Liberty of being frequently alone together,

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together, made the best they could of it, and told the Family that she had only slipp'd a little Way into the Water, and that had detain'd them till they could get her Things dried.

THIS Excuse pass'd off well enough, and did not in the least hinder them from the Freedoms that they had before taken in this their Place of Rendezvous; but instead of the innocent Amusement of Angling, their Time was now employ'd in saying a Thousand tender Things, and giving each other mutual Assurances of their Affection. No Pair could be happier than these were for several Months, till LAURA took it in her Head to confine LIBERTINA more particularly to her own Company. This, in some Measure, disconcerted their Designs, and all the Testimony they could share of each other's Love were some stolen Smiles
and

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and gentle Squeezes by the Hand, when they could give them unperceiv'd, but the young Lady being too impatient to endure this silent Way of wooing long, first set on foot the Intercourse of Letters, upon the Terms that BENITO had proposed, as she was well read in Romances, it is no Wonder that her Stile favoured strongly of the Authors whence she had drawn her Erudition ; of which the following is an Instance.

The Disconsolate ÆNONE to her Beloved PARIS.

“ DID my dear PARIS know
“ the Inquietude that his
“ ÆNONE has felt, for some Time
“ past, at being deprived of his agreeable
“ Conversation, he would
“ pity my Unhappiness ; but the
“ Gods forbid that he should ever
“ suffer

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“ suffer half the Uneasiness that has
“ perplex’d my Soul. All the Di-
“ versions on Earth are tasteless and
“ insipid without you : It is impos-
“ sible for me to form a Thought or
“ Idea of any Thing but you : In
“ my most serious Employments,
“ and even at my Devotion your
“ Image intrudes between the Al-
“ tar and me : I despise Grandeur,
“ State and Superiority of Rank are
“ troublesome unless you were to
“ share them with me : O ! be kind,
“ and invent some Way to give me
“ Ease ! Happy were it for me, had
“ I been born the humble Shepher-
“ defs, whose Character you have
“ taught me to assume, the peaceful
“ Shades had not then been disturb-
“ ed with my Sighs, and the mild
“ Zephyrs had repeated no other
“ Name but your’s : Then when
“ the Labours of the Day were o-
“ ver, and I lay reclin’d upon a
“ Bank, list’ning to your rural Pipe,
“ the

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“ the Nymphs of I D A would envy
“ my Bliss, and the contending God-
“ desses grow jealous of the Pleasures
“ I should share: Alas! whither
“ does the dear Idea hurry me!
“ What Scenes of imaginary Tran-
“ sport do I form to myself, which
“ sad Reflection in a Moment ba-
“ nishes far away! I see each Day
“ the lovely Youth, and read the
“ Rapture my Presence gives him
“ in his Eyes, but am denied to
“ catch his tender Sighs and hear
“ his ardent Vows! Since that is
“ forbidden me, if you would ease
“ me on the Rack of wild Impa-
“ tience, and all the Multitude of
“ Ills which eager glowing Love af-
“ frights itself with, be quick,
“ write to me, and save me from
“ fell Despair.

Your tender and undone

ÆNONE.

LIBER-

LIBERTINA took an Opportunity to convey this privately into BENITO'S Hand, which left him no Room to doubt of her Inclinations, and convinc'd him that if he managed Matters rightly, there were not many Obstacles to surmount before he might get Possession of her Person. The Hopes of this made him plume himself up, and behave so insolently to his Fellow Servants that they were all very much surpriz'd, and began to jeer him and taunt him on Account of the Oddness of his Behaviour: He, however, bore all the Reflections they flung upon him without heeding them, and applied himself more closely than ever to please his Mistress, and finding that she approv'd of the Method he had fix'd to carry on their Amour, resolv'd to humour her, and accordingly sent her the following Reply to her kind Letter.

The

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The Happy PARIS *to his Adored*
ÆNONE.

“ **T**HE sweetest Melody, and
“ all the melting Sounds
“ of Harmony could not tune my
“ Soul to such a Pitch of Extacy,
“ as the tender Sentiments which
“ you have express’d towards me,
“ even Adoration is too poor a Word
“ to speak the Idea I have for the
“ unbounded Favours you have con-
“ ferr’d on me in selecting me to a
“ Place in your Affections: May I
“ prove worthy of the Bliss you de-
“ sign me! When I would endea-
“ vour to say how much you are
“ Mistress of my Soul, all Language
“ is deficient! Spare then my Words,
“ and permit me the first Opportu-
“ nity to throw myself at your Feet,
“ and by silent soft Endearments,
“ shew how much the Raptures of
“ Love exceed the bare Mention of
“ it;

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“ it; till when judge the Impa-
“ tience of

Your faithful P A R I S.

BENITO did not think this sufficient to please her alone, but knowing that from her Infancy she had imbibed a Taste for Poetry; he, at the same Time, inclosed the following Lines as a Proof of his Genius.

To ÆNONE.

*T*O thee, dear Nymph, fair Queen
of my Desires!
Thou beauteous Cause of all my tender
Fires!
The Muse her early grateful Tribute
pays,
To thee who first inspir'd my tender
Lays!

W I D E

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WIDE spreads the sylvan Scene,
the Flocks around
Thy Presence court; our oaten Pipes
resound
Thy Beauty's Praise; no other Name
is heard,
ÆNONE is to all the Plain preferr'd;
CLORIS is fair, the brightest on the
Green,
And bears the Palm aloft 'till thou
art seen;
Then to thy Feet th'admiring Swains
repair,
And gladly prostrate all their Gar-
lands there.

BEAR me some Pow'r unseen to
the cool Grove,
With wanton Zephyrs breathing nought
but Love.
There on a mossy Bank with thee re-
clin'd,
Our Arms in gentle Folds of Love
entwin'd :

F

Let

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*Let me upon thy Bosom breathe my
 Vows,
 Thy Bosom that with warmest Wishes
 glows ;
 Catch the soft Murmur and the willing
 Glance,
 And balmy Kisses that my Soul en-
 trance !
 Such Bliss is more than mortal, like
 thy Charms,
 And Heav'n is only centred in thy
 Arms !*

THE amorous Pair carried on a Correspondence, in this Manner, for upwards of three Months, but as Lovers, when they have once told their Minds, have seldom any Thing to say but a Repetition of the same Things over and over again, it is needless to relate any more of them, especially as these will give you an Idea what the rest of them must be; and to pursue my Narration I must inform

inform you, that BENITO had so far carried his Point with the young Lady that she had consented to all he offer'd, and would have even made him her Husband, but before they could bring their Scheme to Perfection, LAURA, for some private Reason relative to her own Affairs, took a sudden Resolution to depart from that Country, and retire to another Villa which she had at a great Distance. It was there that an odd Frolick happen'd which will shew both Miss and her Mamma in their true Lights; BENITO had made an Entertainment at an Inn in the Town which was near to their Seat, at which most of the young People were present, LIBERTINA would gladly have made one of the Company, but as she knew she could not do it without LAURA's Knowledge she was oblig'd to desist: However, it came into her Head towards Night, that if she could dress herself in

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Mens Cloaths, she might pass undiscovered, as being very little known in that Place: Accordingly, she had no sooner resolv'd than she put it in Execution, but she was too young to engage in such an Affair by herself, she communicated her Design to MARIANNE, a brisk young Maid in the Family, who was as ripe for any Exploit of that Kind as her young Mistress. But LIBERTINA did not in the least acquaint her with the Reason of her doing this, or that it was upon BENITO's Account. The Maid undertook to provide Cloaths for them both, and borrowing an handsome Suit for her Mistress of the Steward's Son, and fitted herself with a Livery of a Gentleman's Servant who lived in the Town: Thus equipp'd they sat out for the intended Place of Rendezvous, but before they got there they met with a strange Rencontre which very much impeded their Design.

Mens

F s

WHAT

WHAT particularly favour'd their Scheme was LAURA's going out upon a Visit alone : They did not know where she was gone to, but was told that she would not come home to Supper ; so that having all the Evening to themselves, they resolv'd to make their Frolick as merry as they could : The Moon shone very bright, and LIBERTINA who made a smart, pretty Figure in her Mens Cloaths, led the Way. The Path which led from their House to the Town lay by the Side of a pleasant Brook, and Part of it was shaded with a double Row of Chesnut Trees, the Gloom of which render'd it very delightful and agreeable : They were no sooner got into this Walk but they were met by LAURA and another Lady, who first accused them, telling them they were pretty Fellows, to suffer two Ladies to wait in the open Air so long ; but coming

F 3

up

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up closer to them they perceiv-
ed they were mistaken in the Per-
sons, and expected some other Per-
sons there instead of them; LIBER-
TINA, who was but young in such
Sort of Intrigues as these, this being
the first and boldest Attempt she had
ever made, shudder'd to hear her
Mother's Voice: However, her Spi-
rit and Vivacity carried her through
it, and she rightly judg'd that the
best Way to avoid a Discovery would
be to bear it out with a becoming
Assurance; and without speaking a
Word saluted both the Ladies with
an Air that gave them to understand
he was no common Person.

L A U R A, finding her Error turn-
ed it off with a Laugh, and ask'd
him " what could make such an
" agreeable Gentleman be walking
" at such an unseasonable Hour ? "
To whom LIBERTINA, being wil-
ling to pass for a Stranger, answer'd
in

in a broken *French* Accent: “ Ma-
 “ dame, me be une Foreigner, justa
 “ arrivee from *Paris*, me have re-
 “ connoître, *Versailles*, *Marli*, and
 “ *Meudon*, but de Beautie of de Man-
 “ sions of dis rural Retreat, which
 “ surpass them all, avè ver much a-
 “ mazee me ; and such be de
 “ Charms of dese blissful Abodes
 “ that me fall never tire in viewing
 “ de Place where so many Wonders
 “ are compriz’d.”

THIS Reply occasion’d a very
 smart Conversation: LAURA look-
 ed upon herself to be, what she re-
 ally was, a fine Lady ; and taking
 the Answer so intended for her in
 particular, she return’d the Comple-
 ment to the fictitious Gentleman,
 commending the Genteelness of his
 Person, and the Gallantry of his An-
 swer, with other little winning Ways
 of squeezing his Hand, and casting
 such passionate Glances at him, that

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the pretended Cavalier soon perceived he was not displeasing to her, but that the Beauty of the Woman under the Man's Habit had made some Impression upon an Heart which indeed was tender enough of itself and ready to receive it: She told him, moreover, that perceiving him to be a Stranger, she should be glad to entertain him at her House, during his Stay in the Country, and to bring him acquainted with the neighbouring Gentry, and for that Purpose he need only come to that Place at the same Hour the next Evening, and then she would entertain him at his Leisure.

THIS Discourse, in all Probability, had not ended so, for LAURA seem'd to be taken with his Talk as much as she was with his Person; but she perceiv'd by the Light of the Moon, thro' the Trees, two Gentlemen coming up to them, whom the Ladies

Ladies immediately knew to be those with whom they had made an Affignation, and mistook LIBERTINA and her Maid: They therefore broke off their Conversation a little abruptly, and made the best of their Way home for fear of being discover'd; and the pretended *Frenchman*, being as glad to get rid of them as they could be of him, struck cross a By-path, and hastened home likewise, for she was very much frighten'd lest she should be known to her Mother notwithstanding her Disguise; but as good Fortune order'd it, they reach'd the House first, and going in the Back-Way were got into their own Apartment, and were undress'd before LAURA came home; so that there was not the least Suspicion of their being concern'd in this odd Adventure.

ALL that now perplex'd LIBERTINA was the Dread of her dear
BE-

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BENITO's proving inconstant ; for MARIANNE had inform'd her that he had made this Entertainment merely to please a neighbouring Farmer's Daughter, whom he had some Pretensions to. This set her all on Fire, and in the Height of her Resentment, she could not help calling him ingrateful, and several other Epithets, which gave MARIANNE to understand that it was not a Matter of Indifference to her, and the crafty Maid who had herself a Kindness for BENITO, tho' she had more Conduct and Experience than her Mistress, and therefore conceal'd her Thoughts, urged the Affair so home, that she drew enough from her to be convinc'd that she lov'd her Servant, and tho' she could not form any direct Judgment of what had pass'd, yet she found there had been an amorous Intercourse between them, and without letting her Mistress perceive her Uneasiness upon this
this

this Subject, resolv'd to watch them more narrowly for the future: She was railing vehemently against BENITO, when LIBERTINA order'd her to withdraw, for that she had a Mind to be alone; which she had no sooner done, than the young Lady flung herself down upon a Sopha, and endeavour'd to give Vent to her Grief by a Thousand Execrations on the perfidious Lover: She blam'd herself for having demean'd her Birth, by stooping so low as to place her Affections on a Servant, and in that Temper of Mind resolv'd to shun all Conversation with him, and not give him any further Opportunity of addressing her in the Manner he had done; but Love overcome all Efforts she could try, to shake it off, and perswaded her that it was cruel, to condemn one unheard for whom she had so tender an Esteem, and made her conclude to send him a Letter to give him an Opportunity to

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to vindicate himself, and immediately sat down and wrote.

ÆNONE to her Suspected
PARIS.

“ IF thou art false, oh! be yet
 “ kind enough to keep the
 “ fatal Truth from my Knowledge;
 “ but this Night’s Adventure has
 “ given me too much Reason to be
 “ suspicious of you; be quick there-
 “ fore and ease my racking Expecta-
 “ tion: I will walk out in the
 “ Grove this Morning, and there I
 “ desire you to accompany me, and
 “ either clear yourself of the Accu-
 “ sation I have to lay to your Charge,
 “ or give me up to wild Revenge;
 “ for know, notwithstanding the
 “ Favours I have shewn you, if I
 “ find you false, you shall still fall
 “ a Victim to my incens’d Fury.---
 “ Alas! how I rave, if your Love
 “ for

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“ for me is as warm as you express
“ in your last Letter : If I were
“ persuaded of that, how happy
“ should I think myself ! how am-
“ ply rewarded for all that I have
“ done and suffer’d for you ! For
“ I must confess, I love you despe-
“ rately, and shall die with Grief,
“ if you prove perfidious. No, I
“ shall not be able to survive one
“ Moment the Loss of your Heart ;
“ my Death must be the immediate
“ Consequence of your Inconstancy.
“ You may triumph perhaps in my
“ Weakness, and make an Advan-
“ tage of this Declaration, but you
“ are the most ungrateful and con-
“ temptible Man breathing, if you
“ abandon One who has so tender
“ an Affection for you : Do not
“ fail then, my dear P A R I S ! to
“ meet me, as I have before appoint-
“ ed, and dissipate the Trouble and
“ Anguish which you have this
“ Night occasion’d, and by the Plea-
“ sure

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“ sure of finding you faithful, make
 “ me forget all the Miseries I have
 “ suffer’d for Love of you.”

LIBERTINA, having finish’d her Letter, waited with Impatience the coming in of her Lover, which not happening till early in the Morning, she was by that Means depriv’d of her Rest, she long’d to convey it to him as soon as possible, and when all the Family were a-bed, she stole softly down Stairs, and shov’d it under the Door of his Apartment, in such a Manner that he could not chuse but see it the first Thing in the Morning. BENITO was surpriz’d when he read it, and being conscious to himself that he had done wrong in thus exposing himself to his Mistress’s Repentment, resolv’d within himself to attend her as she appointed, and endeavour to pacify her, not only by renewing his Vows
 and

and Protestations to her, but even to push Matters home, and come to the decisive Point at once: He read her Letter several Times over, and notwithstanding her Rage at the Beginning, he perceiv'd that her Heart was favourably dispos'd towards him, he took Care to be ready against she should call him, and had dress'd himself out in a better Manner than ordinary, imagining that as his Person first gain'd her Affections, it would be proper to make the Elegance of that plead his Pardon for the Fault he had committed.

THE young Lady, who had never clos'd her Eyes all Night, went early to her Mother's Apartment, and acquainted her, that she had an Inclination to take a Walk that Morning, and requested that BENITO might attend her. This was readily comply'd with, and they went out together towards the Chestnut-Walk:

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Walk : She said nothing to him till they were got into a lone Place, and then sitting down under the Shade of the Trees, upon a Bench made on Purpose for the Ease of those who had a Mind to recreate themselves in that delightful Place. She began to upbraid him very severely, when BENITO flung himself at her Feet, and making many Protestations of his Sincerity, beseech'd her not to impute that to his Want of Regard to her, or Fondness for another, which was nothing but a little harmless Gallantry, and assuring her that all which had been told her was false, begg'd her to cease her Suspicions, and prevent him to shew how much he ador'd her, by performing any Task that she would bid him undertake.

THE relenting Fair One could not suffer such Contrition in a Lover to go unpardon'd ; she rais'd him up,

up, and tenderly leaning on his Shoulder, suffer'd him to take a kind reconciling Embrace: " No! " my dear PARIS, said she, your " ÆNONE shall never more doubt " your Truth, and all the Task I " shall assign you is only to continue " constant, and we will shortly contrive a Way to make our Happiness lasting; in the mean time be " assur'd that whatsoever shall be told " me for the future, shall never create in me the least Doubt of your " Affection.

" MADAM, replied BENITO, I " am at a Loss how to acknowledge " this Goodness as I ought, but you " have very much alarm'd my Fears " both for yourself and me: You " are sensible, that if your Mother " were to be made acquainted with " the Happiness we enjoy in these " tender Meetings, she would soon " deprive us of it, and order Mat-
G " ters

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" ters so that we should never per-
 " haps see each other more ; it be-
 " hoves us therefore to be very cir-
 " cumspect in our Conduct.---- Par-
 " don me, dear *ÆNONE*, if my
 " Apprehensions are without Foun-
 " dation, but I am afraid you have
 " indiscreetly hinted Something of
 " our Intimacy to some Body, to
 " whom I could wish it had still re-
 " main'd a Secret : This Imaginati-
 " on arises from what you said to me,
 " that you had been told a Story,
 " which occasion'd the angry Sur-
 " mises that you had form'd of me
 " in your Letter. Let me conjure
 " you then, my lovely Fair, to ease
 " my racking Expectation, and in-
 " form me, who has thus disturbed
 " our Quiet."

LIBERTINA, who was now so
 well pleas'd with her Admirer, that
 she was not in the Humour to deny
 him any Thing, related to him her
 Adven-

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Adventure the Night before, and all that had pass'd between her and MARIANNE, and the Jealousy she had rais'd in her upon his Account.

BENITO at this started up in a Rage: "And is MARIANNE, cried he, the Fiend that has conjur'd up this Storm, and has she no other Way to be reveng'd on me, for the Sights I have put upon her, but this?" ----- "What Sights!" says LIBERTINA confus'd) or, "What Reason can she have to seek Revenge on you?" ----- "Start not, my Angel! replied he, for I now see through the whole Affair, she has many times thrown herself in my Way, saying a thousand soft Things, and trying to gain a Place in my Heart, but you have taken such firm Possession there, that it had no Room left for Intruders: I despis'd her Offers, and constantly treated her

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“ with Disdain. This, I am afraid
 “ has irritated her, and set her as a
 “ Spy upon our Actions; and if she
 “ has the least Suspicion of the Ho-
 “ nour you have done me, no Won-
 “ der that she has strove to set us at
 “ Variance, as knowing that would
 “ be an Injury which would touch me
 “ in the most sensible Part: Let me
 “ therefore hope that you see thro’
 “ the shallow Device, and are firmly
 “ convinc’d of my Truth and Con-
 “ stancy.” ----- “ I am, I am, my
 “ dear BENITO, said she, in a Rap-
 “ ture, and will take Care for the
 “ future, that the most piercing Eye
 “ shall not discover our stolen De-
 “ lights.”

TENDER Embraces and soft Dal-
 liances confirm’d their Reconciliation,
 when BENITO, not content with
 the superficial Joys of Love, was put-
 ting himself in a Condition to snatch
 the greatest Bliss it could bestow; and
 the

the easy melting Maid, subdu'd by the thrilling Passion that play'd round her Heart, lay supine, expos'd to all his Wishes, and incapable of resisting any Freedoms that he had a Mind to take: Just then, when they had both lost all Power of Expression, and soft Sighs and Murmurs were all that they could utter, in the very Moment that he would have seiz'd her Virgin Treasure, they were interrupted by MARIANNE, who pretended that she was sent by LAURA to see for the young Lady to deliver a Message to her; but in reality had heard of their going out together, and being stung by Jealousy imagin'd there was something more than ordinary in it, and had therefore to satisfy her Curiosity follow'd them unseen, and hid herself behind the Bench where they sat, and had been privy to all that pass'd, and intended to steal off undiscover'd, and make the best Use of her Intelligence, but finding they

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proceeded so far as they had done, and which was more than she expected, she was no longer able to endure it, but surpriz'd them in the very Height of the pleasing Scene. It was impossible to express the Astonishment on all Sides; BENITO stood like a Statue incapable of concealing what he design'd, and unable to make his Retreat; LIBERTINA, quite senseless, suffer'd herself to be led away by MARIANNE, and went home, leaving BENITO to recover his frighted Senses as well as he could.

THE Maid no sooner got home than she ran full of Spite and Malice to LAURA's Room; and acquainted her with the whole Affair: She could scarce give Credit to it at first, but MARIANNE affirm'd it so often, and brought so many circumstantial Proofs, that she was soon convinc'd that some speedy Course must be taken to prevent her Daughter's throwing herself

self away upon her Footman, LAURA went immediately to the young Lady's Chamber, and seizing upon her Cabinet in the first Place, there found all BENITO's Letters: There was then no Room to doubt of the Intrigue that had been so long carried on, and LAURA began to upbraid her Daughter with her mean Spirit in stooping so low as to encourage a common hireling Servant to address her so familiarly. " I now
" find out, says she, the Reason that
" you took such Delight in Fishing
" and Walking, it was that you
" might enjoy your Fellow's Com-
" pany, but if I had had the least
" Grain of Thought I should have
" been more cautious than to trust
" such a giddy young Wench in such
" lone Places."

" MADAM, replies LIBERTINA
" smartly, if you are afraid to trust
" me in such lone Places, yet you
" can

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“ can go there yourself, and meet
 “ Fellows by Moon-light. ” This
 Answer shock'd L A U R A a little,
 but she thought proper to take no
 Notice of it then, and went on with
 reproving her, when officious M A -
 R I A N N E, who was highly pleas'd
 to see her Revenge take Place, in-
 form'd her that B E N I T O was come
 home; L A U R A sent for him up
 Stairs, and fell upon him like a T i -
 gress, and without staying to hear
 him speak one Word in Return, or-
 der'd her Steward to discharge him
 immediately, and turn him out of
 Doors; L I B E R T I N A was confin'd
 under the Care of the watchful M A -
 R I A N N E, and no Body else suffer'd
 to approach her.

B U T L A U R A, when she came to
 reflect on what had pass'd, remem-
 ber'd the Reprimand that her Daugh-
 ter had given her, and conscious to
 herself that she deserv'd that and a
 great

great deal more, thought the most prudent Step that she could take would be to send **LIBERTINA** to live with one of the Guardians appointed by her Father to take Care of her, and by giving them a special Charge to look after her, she should avoid not only a great deal of Trouble and Anxiety, but the censorious World would have the less Room to blame her, if the young Lady should do any Thing wrong. With this Resolution she immediately wrote to the Guardian to come and fetch the young Lady, as follows :

LAURA to HONORIO.

S I R,

“ **I** T is almost impossible to express the Concern which
“ every tender Mother must feel,
“ who

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“ who has a beautiful Daughter left
“ under her Care : In the gay,
“ thoughtless Season of roving Youth,
“ when Passions are most predomi-
“ nant, and require the greatest Check,
“ they are least capable of restraining
“ them, and the first favourable Im-
“ pression that is made in their glow-
“ ing Hearts hurries them down the
“ Stream of Pleasure, till a violent
“ Gust at last perhaps shipwrecks
“ their Reputation : I am sorry to
“ acquaint you that I have discover-
“ ed something of this Kind in Li-
“ BERTINA, the Particulars of which
“ I must refer till I have the Honour
“ of seeing You : She is grown too
“ headstrong for my Government ;
“ therefore must beg the Favour of
“ You to come as speedily as possi-
“ ble, and put in Execution the
“ Trust repos’d in You by her de-
“ ceased Father. I have taken all
“ the cautionary Prevention I am
“ Mistress

“ Mistress of, but am afraid of proceeding too far in so nice a Point.

“ Adieu.

L A U R A.

HONORIO immediately upon the Receipt of this Letter set out for LAURA's Villa, and being inform'd of all that had pass'd between the young Lady and BENITO, agreed to take her home with him: She was quite enrag'd at the Disappointment she had suffer'd, and in all Probability would not have consented so readily to accompany her Guardian, but the Restraint LAURA had lain her under, render'd her quite desperate, besides that she could not bear the Sight of MARIANNE, who like a true insolent Chamber-maid did not fail to taunt and insult her as often she had an Opportunity: And as for BENITO his Love was not so violent, but finding if he had run away with the
the

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the Lady he would have stood but a very indifferent Chance for her Fortune, he let his Pretensions drop very easily, and gave himself no further Trouble about her.

WE are now to change the Scene in regard to LIBERTINA, and instead of viewing her amongst Sycophants and Admirers, with an eternal Din of Witticisms and Flights of Gaiety which surrounded the Toilette of LAURA ; instead of the criminal Indulgencies she had too long allow'd herself with BENITO, and which must at last have prov'd fatal to her, we are to follow her in her Transmigration, from the Wantonness which reign'd in LAURA'S House ; to the sober Family of the good HONORIO, where every Thing was kept in an exact Decorum, and Vice or Folly durst not shew their hateful Heads. The Manner of their Living may best be judg'd by the De-

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Description of a Wit of LAURA'S Acquaintance wrote about that Time.

“ THEY tell me, that at ****
“ certain antiquated Charities and
“ obsolete Devotions are yet subsist-
“ ing: That a Thing call'd Christi-
“ an Chearfulness (not incompatible
“ with *Christmas* Pies and Plum-
“ Broth) whereof frequent is the
“ Mention in old Sermons and Al-
“ manacks, is really kept alive and
“ in Practice: That feeding the
“ Hungry, and giving Alms to the
“ Poor, do yet make a Part of good
“ Housekeeping, in a Latitude not
“ more remote than Fourscore Miles,
“ and that Prayers and Roast Beef
“ actually make some People as hap-
“ py as a Whore and a Bottle; but
“ here in Town, I assure you, Men,
“ Women and Children have done
“ with these Things. Charity not
“ only begins but ends at Home:
“ Instead

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“ Instead of four Cardinal Virtues,
“ now reign four Princely Ones. —
“ We have Cunning for Prudence,
“ Rapine for Justice, Time-serving
“ for Fortitude, and Luxury for
“ Temperance. Whatever you may
“ fancy, where you live in a State
“ of Ignorance and see nothing but
“ Quiet, Religion and good Hu-
“ mour, the Case is just as I tell
“ you where People understand the
“ World, and know how to live
“ with Credit and Glory.

“ I wish that Heaven could open
“ the Eyes of Men, and make them
“ sensible which is right: Whether
“ upon a due Conviction, we are to
“ quit Faction and Gaming, High-
“ feeding and Whoring, and take to
“ your Country Way? Or you to
“ Prayers and Almsgiving, and read-
“ ing an Exercise, and come into our
“ Measures.”

THIS

THIS may give you an Idea how much more LIBERTINA was confin'd here from following her Inclinations than she was at her Mother's, but HONORIO knew this Course of Life would not at all suit her Disposition, and that it was morally impossible to put a Restraint upon one of her mercurial Spirit: He therefore acted the Part of a good Guardian, and endeavour'd to find out a Spouse suitable to her Birth and Fortune, being willing to place her in a proper Station of Life, as well as to exonerate himself of the burthenfome Task of watching a young Beauty, who was ripe for any passionate Attack that should offer, and who had already tasted some of the Sweets of Love; but he was willing at the same Time, if he could contrive it, that her own Inclination should accompany his Choice. For this Purpose he had Recourse to a Noble-

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Nobleman whose Estate lay contiguous to his, and who was possess'd of some of the highest Titles and Honours in the Nation. It was rumour'd that by the Liberality of his Ancestors and his own youthful Extravagance, it had been deeply mortgag'd, but as HONORIO knew that LIBERTINA was Heiress to a very large Sum of Ready Money, besides her own Estate, he thought that would retrieve the Don's, and so they might exactly suit each other: He might intitle her to higher Dignities and Precedence than she could claim by Birth, and she in Return might restore to him his Paternal Domains whole and entire.

HE first of all try'd how the young Lady would relish a Proposal of that Sort, and was continually praising this Grandee before her, and expatiated largely upon the Pleasure that must arise from being the Wife
of

of such a Man, who could make her shine with distinguish'd Lustre in the Assemblies of the Fair and Gay; one that could make her the Envy of her Sex, and the Admiration of the Court. LIBERTINA swallow'd the Bait, she had not yet forgot BENITO, and as nothing could be more disagreeable to her than to live under the Restraint she did; she concluded, that if she had such a Husband, it would give her more Liberty, and she could be as happy as she pleas'd with her Favourite, she listen'd attentively to all HONORIO said, who was ignorant what Motive induc'd her to shew such Readiness to accept his Offer, and did not once imagine that the Love she still retain'd for a common Servant could make her run the Risque of marrying a Man, whom if he had consider'd, he must have known it was impossible for her to love; but he imputed it to another Cause, and thought that the Hopes
H of

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of a Title, and the Honour of being a Lady to one of the first Grandees, had allur'd her, and entirely turn'd the Bias of her Inclinations; for, Ladies, when I mention Don DANDIN, nobody that is acquainted with him can conceive that he was able to raise a Passion in the Breast of any Woman; but as perhaps he may be a Stranger to some of this Company, I will give you a short Description of him, and then leave you to judge, whether he could have any Charms to captivate the Heart of a young Lady so gay, and so much inclin'd to Gallantry as LIBERTINA'S.

THE Disproportion of their Age in the first Place was a mutual Bar to all Happiness, for she was not above Seventeen or Eighteen Years of Age, and his would have doubl'd that: His Person was barely tolerable, but would have suited the old vulgar Proverb of not quite frightening

ing the Horse he rode upon. Add to this, that he was almost constantly afflicted with the Gout, and instead of flying with the Eagerness of a Lover to a young Lady's Arms, he was forc'd to be carried up and down Stairs from his Parlour to his Bed. His Senses were as impotent as his Limbs, and his Temper enough to frighten every body from his Presence, for his Birth and Rank made him naturally haughty, and that by a long Series of Diseases had sower'd him into a downright perverse Obstinacy; insomuch that whenever he was call'd upon to deliver his Opinion in the *Grand Sanhedrim* of the Nation, he would rise up, and after saying a great deal of Nothing, he would clap his Hand on his Sword, and cry, "These are my Sentiments, which
" I will maintain with this." And if he was so imperious in such an awful Assembly as that, it may be easily imagin'd what he was in his
H 2 own

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own Family amongst his Slaves and Vassals: In short, he was so improper a Match for the young sprightly LIBERTINA that the Servants of HONORIO, when they first heard their Master mention it, made themselves privately very merry with it, saying it would be *May* and *December* join'd, and one of them more spitefully witty than wise, said, "that
 " if they ever had any Issue it would
 " be of the *Bat* Kind, the Vivacity of
 " the Mother would give it Wings
 " to fly, yet not enable it to conceal
 " the Reptile Part, which it should
 " borrow from the Father."

ON the other Hand we are to consider, that in Return for all these bad Qualities, he had high Honours to bestow, and they were sufficient to win a female Mind, whose utmost Ambition is to command, and be in the foremost Rank wherever she comes. And as HONORIO knew
 this

this was the strongest Motive he could urge in his Favour, he did not fail to set it in the most glaring Light, and LIBERTINA had conceiv'd so favourable an Idea of him that she long'd mightily to see this splendid Lover, but she was oblig'd to stay some Time before her Curiosity could be satisfied, for a violent Fit of the Gout confin'd him to his Chamber for upwards of a Month.

THE careful Guardian had been no less assiduous in acquainting Don DANDIN with the Beauties of LIBERTINA, but above all enforc'd the Charms of her large Estate, and the vast Sum of ready Money which she was possess'd of, so strenuously that the impatient Lover was fir'd with Expectation before he beheld her; how often did he curse the Impotence of his Limbs, that denied him from paying a Visit to the fair Object of his Wishes: He call'd to his Aid

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the most powerful Restoratives, and all the generous Drugs that lavish Nature has bestow'd on the *Eastern* World to renovate the torpid Limbs, and infuse new Blood into the Veins of decay'd Mankind; but the obstinate Disease withstood their fierce Attacks, and only chang'd its Situation, as if it would maintain to the last the Dominion it had got over his enervated Members. Sometimes his Hands were unable to perform their Functions, sometimes his Feet; and then again to shew its utmost Efforts it would throw his whole Body into violent Convulsions, and almost tear asunder his mortal Frame: How did he curse the lingering Disease! How often wish MEDEA was now alive with potent Herbs, and her magic Caldron to restore him to his pristine State as she had done old ÆSON in the same Condition? But it baffled all the Art of the most skilful of the *Æsculapian* Tribe, and the old

old prescrib'd Remedy of Patience and Flannel only could relieve him. At length, as the infant Season of the Year grew stronger, the Distemper having spent its Virulence, the Sun's genial Beams, which give new Life to every Thing, rais'd Don DANDIN from his Couch, and enabled him to lay by his Crutches, 'till the next woful Attack should again demand their Assistance.

THE *Grande* was no sooner able to go abroad, than he sent Word to HONORIO that he would pay him a Visit: It was easy to guess with what Intention he came, and the young Lady was appriz'd of it by her Maid. She did not know how to behave herself, or whether she had best see him or not at his first Visit; but as she was entirely ignorant of his being such Sort of a Man, as I have describ'd, and therefore thought that seeing her in an

Undress, and by Surprise, as it were, if she could order Matters so, would captivate him the sooner.

HONORIO made a grand Entertainment for his Guest, and sent to desire LIBERTINA to dress herself as elegant as possible to honour the Don with her Presence at Table: She return'd for Answer by her Maid that she was so much disorder'd she could not possibly see Company that Day. Her Guardian was not satisfied with this Excuse, and went to her Apartment himself. She feign'd her Indisposition so naturally, that it was impossible for HONORIO to dispute her being really ill; and notwithstanding all the Eloquence he was Master of, and all the Persuasions he could use, she still remain'd inflexible, and insisted upon keeping her Chamber that Day.

H A

HAVING thus got the better of her Guardian, she order'd her Woman to bring her Intelligence of all that pass'd, and, if the Don was as pressing a Lover as he had been represented to her, LIBERTINA told her, that she did not doubt but he would come up to her Chamber, and that no Disorder attended her, but she knew herself to be one of those Beauties that charm'd most in an Undress; that her Design was therefore to surprize him, that Way; and gave her Orders to seem a little reluctant at first to his Entrance, but to consent to it at last. The Maid, who was more faithful to her than MARIANNE had been, promis'd to obey her Will in every Respect, and then set about adorning her in the most agreeable Dishabillee she could invent. And whilst we leave them busy in that, it will not be amiss, to relate how Don DANDIN was receiv'd

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ceiv'd at HONORIO's, and the Disappointment he met with at not finding his lovely Mistress present at the Entertainment to grace it.

THE Grandee, who was yet unacquainted with her Person, ow'd all the Raptures he felt, more to the Fame of her Wealth than her Beauty, for whatever the most passionate Lovers may talk of the Flames and Darts which they feel at the Sight of a fair Face, it is certain that the little wanton God takes surer Aim and wounds deeper, when he sends his Shafts from the Lands and Tenements than from the brightest Eyes; at least Don DANDIN acknowledg'd this to be true, he had that Day dress'd himself out in all the Prodigality of Dress in order to attract the View of his Mistress, and his feeble Limbs shiver'd under the gaudy Ornaments he had cloath'd them with; his Equipage was very grand, and his

his pamper'd Steeds were drove with more than ordinary Velocity up the Avenue which led to H O N O R I O's Villa, as if by that they would express the Eagerness of their Master to come at the Place that held his lovely Treasure! Happy would it have been for him, if in his own Person he could have retain'd the Vigour in Love he thus emblematically described; L I B E R T I N A saw him approach from a Window in her Apartment, her little Heart flutter'd for Joy, and she could not help telling her Maid the Pleasure she felt at the Thoughts of being Mistress of such an Equipage, and driving about with full Freedom in one continu'd Round of Pleasure; for she was one of those Ladies, who think that Marriage takes off the Restraint they lie under when they are single.

D O N D A N D I N was receiv'd in the Hall by H O N O R I O, and conducted

ed into the Parlour, where an elegant Collation was provided for him. After the usual Ceremonies had passed, he enquir'd after LIBERTINA, and was inform'd, that she was so very much indispos'd that she could not wait on him, or see Company: " But, says HONORIO, these young
 " Girls are so squeamish that there
 " is no accounting for their Hu-
 " mours. I have tried all the Per-
 " suasions I am Master of, to induce
 " her to come down, and I really
 " believe she has only refus'd me, to
 " have the Honour of gratifying you
 " in complying with your Request;
 " your Lordship's Eloquence may,
 " perhaps, surmount the Difficulties
 " which I could not: If therefore
 " you have a Mind to try, I will
 " conduct you to her Apartment,
 " and leave you to try the Efficacy
 " of a Lover's Sighs.

D A N-

D A N D I N thank'd him very obligingly for this Courtesy, and told him he was very willing to try if he could prevail on the Lady to grant him that Favour, which without any Compliment to him was the principal Motive of his Visit; and accordingly going up to her Apartment they were met by L I B E R T I N A 's Maid, who made some feint Excuses to prevent his Entrance at first, but he growing more importunate she at last admitted him, and H O N O R I O smiling, withdrew, crying: " Well! my Lord, I hope the
" Importunity of so accomplish'd a
" Nobleman will not fail of Success, though the Authority of a
" Guardian could by no Means obtain it."

L I B E R T I N A, who expected something like this had prepar'd herself to receive him in the best Manner:

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ner : She had no Stays on, and with an artful Negligence had left her swelling Breasts almost bare ; she had but one Petticoat on, very rich, and rather of the shortest, and a very fine Night-gown which hung loose about her. In this gay and tempting Dress, as beautiful as another CLEOPATRA, she had laid herself down in a careless Manner upon a Couch in her Closet : Some little Emotions made her blush, and put her in a Kind of Confusion when he enter'd her Apartment, which she to conceal pretended to be asleep, and so gave him what Time he pleas'd, to survey all the Beauties which the Negligence of her Dress expos'd to View, and by some Motions, occasion'd as it should seem by her Slumbers being disturb'd betray'd Beauties enough to warm the Heart of the most frozen Anchorite.

AT

The Fair Adulteress. III

AT the first Sight, DANDIN for a little while stood like one in a Extacy. If he lov'd her before for her Estate, he was now doubly her Admirer for her Charms, and after he had sufficiently feasted his Eyes on her rising Breasts and well-turn'd Limbs, which were but badly conceal'd through her thin Dress: His eager Wishes, fir'd by the Hopes of future Transport, prompted him to snatch a Taste of Bliss, and stooping to salute her, she suffer'd him not to obtain so great a Favour: She started up surpriz'd, and would have gone out of the Closet, but he detain'd her, and begg'd her to excuse this rude Intrusion, informing her who he was, and what Motive induc'd him to it: She seem'd to be very angry, and inveigh'd bitterly against HONORIO for suffering a Gentleman to come thus alone into her Chamber; DANDIN endeavour'd to pacify

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fy her by all the soft Expressions he could make use of, and earnestly intrusted her to favour them with her Company: He implor'd her so tenderly, that at last with a seeming Complacence: " My Lord, said she, " it would be the greatest Piece of " ill Manners in me to deny a Gentleman of your Distinction, so poor " a Request as you have made, nor " should I have put you to the Trouble of making it, had not my sudden Indisposition prevented my doing myself that Honour, and upon that Account, I hope, you will " excuse my being so rude as not to " comply with a Thing that will be " detrimental to my Health."

" MADAM, replied DANDIN, I " would be very far from desiring any Thing of that Nature, but as " the Fame of your Charms drew " me hither, which since Fortune " has favour'd me with a Sight of, " I

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“ I find Report falls far short of the
“ Original : Do not rob me of the
“ only Bliss I wish’d to share in en-
“ joying your Company : You are,
“ Madam, one of the most amiable
“ Creatures on the Face of the Earth.
“ It is impossible to look upon you,
“ and not to love ; the Darts that
“ come from your Eyes have pierc-
“ ed my Heart. In short, I find
“ that by this first View I love you
“ to Adoration, and am the most
“ unhappy Man breathing, if you
“ prove insensible of my Pain !

LIBERTINA was not unmov’d
at this Discourse, she perceiv’d that
Don DANDIN look’d very tenderly
upon her, and was not a little proud
of making such a Conquest, but to
give her new Lover some Opinion of
her Modesty, she thought it not pro-
per to seem too yielding at the first
Attack, and therefore pretended to
take every Thing he had said as spo-
ken

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ken in pure Gallantry: She told him therefore with a Smile, “ That his
“ Lordship in making such a Decla-
“ ration to her, was minded, as she
“ imagin’d, to divert himself; that
“ she was not so vain as to think that
“ any Thing in the Country could
“ move his Affections, but suppo-
“ sing she could, his Love would
“ continue no longer than he staid
“ there, and at his Return to Court
“ he would not fail to make his
“ Friends merry with a Recital of
“ the Weakness which the Ladies
“ there had shewn during his Stay
“ amongst them.”

“ No, Madam, replied Don
“ DANDIN, you do not know me;
“ I am no *Gallant* by Profession, no
“ Teller of merry Tales, in order to
“ make Sport with Ladies Charac-
“ ters. And as to the Court, I sel-
“ dom or never come near the Place
“ where Honour and Innocence can-
“ not

The Fair Adulterers. 115

“ not breathe in Safety : I love you
“ in Reality, and put it now in your
“ Power to have Possession of my
“ Heart as long as I live.”

LIBERTINA blush'd at this, and
told him, “ That these were Decla-
“ rations she ought not to listen to
“ out of the Presence of her Guar-
“ dian unless with his Consent.” ----
“ That's what I desire, Madam, re-
“ plied he, and it is with his Per-
“ mission that I now approach you,
“ only to intreat you to honour us
“ with your Company in the Par-
“ lour, where I shall make such
“ Proposals as I hope will induce
“ you to consent to be mine for
“ Life.”

THOUGH she might not perhaps
believe the Sincerity of his last Words,
she nevertheless gave him to perceive
that she should not be sorry to have
further Conviction of them : But not

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to trouble you with a tedious Relation, let it suffice to say, that Don DANDIN made use of such prevailing Arguments that the young Lady, dazzl'd with the View of so much Splendour as would wait her from his Addressee, consented to go down to the Company, if they would excuse her at Dinner-time, and permit her to throw off her Dishabillee. --- The Grandee obey'd her, and in the Afternoon, when the Tables were remov'd, he had the Pleasure of seeing her enter the Room adorn'd with all the Graces which a rich and elegant Dress could add to her native Beauty.

HONORIO made himself very merry with her being so suddenly eas'd of her Indisposition, and attributed all to the genteel Address of her Lover, taking Care to place the Don's Merit in the most conspicuous Light, and by paying him the Ho-
mage

mage due to his high Birth and Dignity, tacitly gave her to understand what Honours she might expect, if she consented to be his Wife, but not thinking that sufficient, when they had been a little longer together, and seem'd pleas'd with each other's Conversation, he propos'd it to her in plain Terms, and after soothing her, told her, " that he
" did not suppose her Maiden Blush-
" es would suffer her to consent im-
" mediately, therefore to spare them,
" he, as her Guardian, order'd her
" to receive Don DANDIN as one
" whom he design'd for her Hus-
" band, and whom he was sure
" L A U R A would not disapprove,
" but that he would send her Word,
" and desire her Company there as
" soon as possible, when if she con-
" sented, as he did not doubt but
" she would, their Nuptials should
" be solemniz'd." And with this
Speech HONORIO quitted the Room

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to them, leaving Don DANDIN to make the most Advantage he could of the Opening he had given him.

THIS was a short Decision of the Matter you'll say, and doubtless it chagrin'd LIBERTINA a little at first to be thus peremptorily order'd to like a Man whether she could or not, but the Hopes she entertain'd of getting rid of the Constraint she labour'd under by this Means, and of shining in the polite World, made her resolve to surmount all Difficulties. And it is to be imagin'd, as BENITO had left some secret Impressions in her Heart, it was not without a Wish of once more seeing him.

DANDIN, who was but a Novice in Love Affairs, was as much surpriz'd as Miss, at being thus left alone with her, and had any indifferent Person been there to have seen their
dumb

dumb Courtship first, and have heard the Dialogue afterwards, it would have afforded them Matter of great Diverſion. What I can remember of it, added CARVILLE, I will relate to you, as I have heard Don DANDIN repeat it ſeveral Times ſince in Mirth; for take him out of his croſs Fits and he is a facetious Companion, and loves his Bottle, indeed rather too well to have much to ſpare for the Fair Sex.

WHEN they were alone, Miſs roſe up, and turning upon DANDIN with a loud Laugh, began to hum a Tune to herſelf, and look'd out of Window. The Lover was a little confounded at this, but conſidering he had a young gay Lady to deal with, he knew the Way to ſucceed was not to be baſſl'd at the firſt Encounter: He follow'd her in a debonaire Manner, and paying many Complements to her Perſon, offer'd to

take her Hand, telling her, " that
 " he hop'd, after the Injunction laid
 " upon her by her Guardian, she
 " would not refuse him so trifling
 " a Favour? " ----- " In Times of
 " Yore, Sir, says she smartly, our
 " Sex never gave their Hands, but
 " where they bestow'd their Hearts,
 " but our new Heraldry, 'as *Shake-*
 " *spear* has it, added she, is Hands
 " not Hearts; though, as you ob-
 " serve, that is not for me to dispute,
 " when my Guardian has order'd
 " me to do one without consulting
 " whether or not it is in my Power
 " to do the other; therefore, Sir,
 " take my Hand, and try if you can
 " make yourself Master of my Heart.
 " That, Madam, replied he, I must
 " endeavour to gain by a constant
 " Endeavour to please you, those
 " stale old Precepts that you men-
 " tion shall be banish'd from us, and
 " nothing but Gaiety and Joy be
 " seen; State, Equipage and Ho-
 " nour

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“nour will attend you wherever you
“go; and I the most submissive of
“your Slaves shall only live to be
“obedient to your Will.”

THESE last Assurances made the Fair as yielding as he could wish, for their Courtship was founded upon the same Basis as most modern ones are. He wanted to be Master of her Fortune; and she was stark-mad to get from her worse than *Egyptian* Bondage, as she call'd it, and take her full Swing of Pleasure. Marriages form'd between such discordant Pairs may be literally stil'd, *the Commerce of the Sexes*. When each Party barters a Commodity that is useless to them for one that they more particularly want, tho' perhaps it is only conducive to Luxury, ye grave Sages! that dictate Laws, and ye who prescribe Rules to Thought and Conscience! I appeal to you, whether this disagreeing Union can be call'd

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call'd any Thing but a *Licens'd Adultery*? Do not they often whilst they join their Hands, think which is the shortest Way to separate? And whilst they offer their Vows, only consider in what Manner they shall best break them to escape Censure?

As such then, Ladies, added CARVILLE, give me Leave to pass over in Silence a Courtship which would be as tedious to you in the Recital as it was to them in the Performance. All I can say is, that after this first Interview they had several others which amounted to the same Purport; the whole may be compriz'd in those two Lines of the Poet:

— *The Lover owns his Flame,
Sighs out the usual Time, then weds
the Dame!*

In short, HONORIO was so eager
to

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to have the Match concluded, that he sent Post for L A U R A to come, and give her Consent. There could be very few Impediments to obstruct it; the Mother was willing to get rid of so troublesome a Guest as her Daughter was likely to be; the Guardian being thoroughly made acquainted with the Affair of B E N I T O, was desirous of having her married as speedily as possible, that he might be able to give a good Account of his Charge before Matters came to a greater Extremity; and L I B E R T I N A though she had no great Disposition to love her Husband, neither did they much consult her Inclination, yet to get from under their Controul, with which she could not live easy, she consented to have him.

T H E Nuptials were solemniz'd in great Magnificence, though every body pitied the young Lady, and even the Priest who perform'd the Ceremony

Ceremony behav'd, as if he was making an Immolation, or giving up a Sacrifice, rather than acting in that Part of his Function, which demanded Joy and Mirth. Their very Appearance was a Contraste, and the holy Father knew that he was uniting Contradictions ; for he was what I have before describ'd, and she was just come to her Perfection of Beauty : Her Stature was not tall, yet her Shape and Proportion were such as might make those of larger Size envy her : Her Behaviour was exquisite, her Air engaging, her Features regular , her Complexion beautiful , her Neck, Arms and Eyes, and the least Part of her even to her Eyebrows full of Charms, and sufficient to captivate the Love of all Beholders. She was, in short, one of the finest Women in the Nation, nor were her latent Charms to be less admir'd than those which appear'd visible to every Eye. She had all the
Wit

Wit in the World, but a Wit of that Kind, which usually falls to the Coquet's Share, more flashy than solid: An Imagination full of Fire and Vivacity, an inexhaustible Fund of Pleasantry, a natural Propensity to Love, and a strong Ambition to gain Admirers, which proceeded from a Consciousness that she deserv'd them.

HER greatest Concern in marrying DANDIN was to have the Charms which Nature had given her in such Plenty confin'd to no one Family, for she was perfectly gay, extremely impatient to appear in Public, and very little sollicitious whether her Husband lov'd her or not, because she was resolv'd never to confine herself to him alone: She told him therefore that she would never oppose his Will, that he might enjoy himself as he pleas'd, for from her he should meet with no Molestation; and in this she was certainly as good as her Word,

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Word, being not in the least uneasy or concern'd to see him prefer the Pleasure of Drinking to the Possession of one of the finest Women in the World.

CAROVILLE ended his Relation: " Thus far, says he, Ladies, " I have given ye the History of " LIBERTINA, my Intimacy in " HONORIO's Family made me acquainted with these Facts: All " that I can say further of my own " Knowledge is, that LAURA seemed " to be sensible her Daughter " would want something very handsome to support her large Train of " separate Inclinations; and therefore took especial Care to swell the " Article of her *Pin Money* very " high, no less than *Ten Thousand Pounds* yearly, and though LIBERTINA behav'd herself very decently to her Husband at first, yet impatient of Constraint, " she

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“ she launch’d forth into such Ex-
“ travagancies soon after, that it was
“ easy for any one to perceive they
“ were not the happiest Couple in
“ the World: Some People indeed
“ are apt to arraign her Discretion,
“ and say she has been guilty of In-
“ trigues very much to her Disho-
“ nour, but as my Intimacy with the
“ Family broke off soon after, I will
“ not take upon me to mention any
“ Thing which I have only from
“ bare Report.

“ You have been very obliging,
“ Count, (says A THENAIS, one of
“ the Ladies) and, as you observe,
“ Report has been very free with
“ LIBERTINA, and not altogether
“ without Reason; and though some
“ Things that have been said of her
“ may be Falsities, yet there are too
“ many true, to suffer her to be
“ rank’d amongst the modest and
“ virtuous Part of the Sex; and e-
“ ven

" ven amongst the Women of a
 " more liberal Taste she is despis'd
 " for having been too vulgar in her
 " Amours, which were so very low
 " that she would admit the meanest
 " of her Servants to her Embraces,
 " and this her Husband certainly
 " must be sensible of: You observ'd
 " when you first saw the Barge go
 " by us, that she was parted from
 " her Husband; and notwithstanding
 " he is a Man of a very odd Hu-
 " mour, as you have describ'd him,
 " yet he has more Sense than to ex-
 " pose himself to be a public Talk,
 " without some Reasons to alledge
 " in his Behalf."

" I was one Summer visiting at
 " a Lady's in the Country, whose
 " Seat adjoin'd to theirs, and as you
 " may be unacquainted with the
 " Motives that induc'd Don DAN-
 " DIN to a Separation, I believe I
 " can inform you, and will venture
 " to

“ to take up the Story where the
“ Count has dropp’d it, and I assure
“ you it will afford a much better
“ Contraste of Life in High and
“ Low Life, than what you have
“ related of her Intrigue with her
“ Servant BENITO, though I have
“ Reason to believe her first Flame
“ was gratified, and he reap’d the
“ Prize which was only the Hus-
“ band’s Right: And as the first
“ Passion commonly is the strongest
“ in our Sex, the Woman that once
“ satiates that, will like LIBER-
“ TINA be indifferent to any o-
“ ther.

SATHELINDE, who had sat all
this while very attentive, highly plea-
sed with the Discovery she had made,
could no longer refrain imparting her
Joy to the rest of the Company:—

“ I would not interrupt you, Ma-
“ dam, says she to ATHENAIS, in
“ giving us the agreeable Entertain-

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"ment which you have prepar'd;
 "but as I am afraid we shall attain
 "the End of our Voyage before you
 "have Time to finish it, and for
 "my Part I shall be doubly curious
 "to hear the Remainder of a Story;
 "wherein we are all of us concern-
 "ed, if not in our particular Per-
 "sons, yet in Behalf of the unhap-
 "py ASTERIA, who doubtless has
 "been injur'd by this very Lady,
 "whom the obliging Count has gi-
 "ven us the History of; for if that
 "was LIBERTINA whom we saw
 "in the Barge, she is the very same
 "Lady, I am positive, that was with
 "PHILOCELL at the Inn when he
 "dropp'd the Paper which I shew-
 "ed you Yesterday, and we have
 "all the Reason in the World to be-
 "lieve that he is now with her in
 "the Barge."

"THIS Eclat astonish'd them all,
 and they vented their Spleen very
 freely

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freely on the perfidious Husband, vowing they would make it a Female Quarrel, and revenge the Cause of the injur'd Wife, when their Curiosity invited them to listen to a female Voice which came from a Saloon close by the Water-side, and which they thought they knew: It was low and disconsolate, "Repeat
" again that mournful Ditty, said
" she, it so nearly resembles my own
" Case that I should never be fir'd
" with hearing it." And the Company stopp'd whilst the Maid sung to her Lute the following excellent Verses:

II

Her Head a pained live of Snow
Secur'd from the too-scorching Sun
Where still the Shepherd thought he saw
The Relicks of a Beauty gone

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The SHEPHERDESS's Complaint.

I.

SYLVIO upon a rising Ground
to tend his fleecy Care was laid;
And listned to a plaintive Sound,
Which ecchoed from the neighb'ring Glade.
There AMORET, forsaken Fair,
Sat telling of her sad-tun'd Tale:
Her Bracelets torn, her Bosom bare,
Her lovely Face quite wan and pale.

II.

Her Head a platted Hive of Straw
Secur'd from the too-scorching Sun,
Where still the Shepherd thought he saw
The Relicks of a Beauty gone :

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A Kerchief, wrought with fond-Conceits,
Oft heav'd she to her languid Eye,
Whereon were blazon'd former Sweets,
Her Lover's Gift when Joys flow'd high.

III.

The fatal Present oft she view'd,
Her rising Sighs, her racking Cares
The fatal Present still renew'd,
And pelleted the Silk with Tears:
“Ye faithless Messengers be gone!
(She cry'd, as she some Papers tore,)
“Here Love its Eloquence hath shewn,
“But what are *Words* when *Love's* no more?

IV.

SYLVIO approach'd the weeping Fair:—
“Fly hence, said she, deceitful Man!
“Can Fraud such godlike Beauty wear?
“From such a Form my Woes began!

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" So kind did faithless STREPHON look,
 " When first he won my easy Heart;
 " So smil'd and flatter'd, when he struck
 " Deep in my Veins the thrilling Dart.

V.

" But, Shepherd, if one gen'rous Thought,
 " Can yet inspire Man's savage Breast,
 " Lift! while a Tale, with Horror fraught,
 " Breaks in sad Accents from my Breast!
 " The lovely STREPHON cannot be
 " A Stranger to these verdant Plains,
 " Where many Nymphs bemoan, like me,
 " His Perfidy in artless Strains.

VI.

" In ev'ry Bosom he did reign,
 " Caught ev'ry Passion with such Art,
 " That she who'd once his Presence seen,
 " Fondly suppos'd she'd gain'd his Heart:

" I,

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“ I, once the Pride of all the Grove,
“ Stood like a fair and uncropp'd Flow'r,
“ 'Till blighted by his baneful Love,
“ I sunk a *Lilly* in a Show'r.

VII.

“ Yet coy Reserve long play'd its Part,
“ Which made me fall no common Spoil,
“ For Proofs fresh-bleeding steel'd my Heart,
“ Which serv'd this Jewel for a Foil.
“ Love's Banquet is all Evil's Source,
“ Prevailing Appetite will taste,
“ And Passions urge their fiery Course;
“ Tho' Reason cries, it is thy Last.

VIII.

“ His various Falshoods rose in View;
“ Yet Self-Opinion ballanc'd all;
“ Thought I, to others, tho' untrue,
“ To me he may a Victim fall.

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“ But who could see the dear soft Youth
 “ tenderly kneeling at my Feet,
 “ Vowing eternal Love, and Truth,
 “ And not like me his Passion meet !

IX.

“ How much too fast the Moments fled !
 “ When I a Goddess fate enshrin’d,
 “ And thus the dear Deceiver said,
 “ Be kind, my AMORET, be kind.
 “ Each Nymph of Coldness me upbraids,
 “ I ne’er before could stoop to sue
 “ This Tribute lent by other Maids,
 “ To thee I offer as thy Due.

X.

“ See this pale Pearl coy LYSETTE sent,
 “ LYRA, this Ruby red as Blood,
 “ Figuring what their Passions meant,
 “ By Grief and Blushes understood.

“ These

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“ These am’rous Bracelets of their Hair,
“ With Gems of various Hues beset,
“ Whose jarring Properties declare,
“ The Conflicts in their Bosoms met.”

XI.

“ The *Di’mond* beautiful and hard,
“ The *Em’rald* pleasing to the Sight,
“ The jealous *Topaz* claims Regard,
“ As doth the Sky-blue *Sapphire* bright:
“ These Hearts that wrongly I enthrall
“ Their Sighs shall for the Bearer pow’r,
“ And what’s a Prize exceeds them all
“ Mine that could never love before.”

XII.

“ Caught by his dear delusive Arts,
“ I yielded,—lov’d,—and was undone!
“ With anxious Pain my Bosom smarts,—
“ The Wand’rer is from me flown.
“ The

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“ The Raptures which my Arms could give,
“ With lewd ROSETTA now he shares—
“ The faithless Shepherd to receive,
“ Yon Jess’ mine Bower she prepares.”

XIII.

“ There let him revel in Delight,
“ Let this green Turf my Coarse enfold—
“ Do thou kind Shepherd do me Right,
“ Whene’er my mournful Tale is told.”

She died, and SYLVIO to the Swains

Rehears’d the melancholy Scene:

Her Grove its Beauty still retains

Adorn’d with constant Ever-Green.

XIV.

From thence the Youths their Garlands pick,

To crown the Lady of the *May*;

Or when the Virgin Bier they’d deck,

Steel thence the Rose and V’let gay:

As

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As if the Gods to warn false Youth

To fly from their impending Doom,

Would shew, " That *Innocence* and *Truth*

" *Look fresh* and *flourish* in the *Tomb*."

" IT is enough, dear MARI-

" ANNE, cried the unknown La-

" dy, thou faithful Companion of

" my tender Fortune, the Wrongs

" done me by my cruel Husband

" will soon reduce me to the wretch-

" ed AMORET'S Condition: Do

" thou then act the generous Shep-

" herd's Part by me, and when thou

" hast seen my Clay-cold Corpse

" laid in the Ground, and bathed

" my Urn with thy Tears, do Ju-

" stice to my Memory and guard

" my Fame from the Obloquy of

" the censorious Vulgar. I have no

" Way left to shield me from the

" Tyranny and Oppression of cruel

" Man, but to retire to my peace-

" ful

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" ful Grove,--- yet let me not im-
 " mediately rush into Futurity, and
 " tempt the ALMIGHTY's Ven-
 " geance by laying barbarous Hands
 " on myself! No, Heaven has af-
 " forded us this calm undiscover'd
 " Retreat, to give me Time to pre-
 " pare myself for a better Life in
 " the Regions of the Blessed: Oh!
 " my MARIANNE, there is some-
 " thing so sweet and consolatory in
 " Innocence, that it softens all the
 " Pangs of Oppression, and is the
 " only Cordial in Life's nauseous
 " Draught. Let us not then envy
 " those whose Guilt makes them
 " great, but submit to their Fortune
 " with a placid Resignation; -----
 " Alas! I endeavour to preach Pa-
 " tience in vain, for every Time I
 " think on my perfidious Husband,
 " my Soul is agitated by a Thou-
 " sand warring Passions; Grief and
 " Despair weigh me down, and I
 " sink beneath the Burthen of my
 " Woes,---

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“ Woes.— What Comfort can these
“ Scenes afford to me who cannot
“ relish Joy! ——— Lend me thy
“ friendly Arm to guide me in,
“ there let me indulge my Sighs,
“ and mourn my lost abandon’d
“ PHILOCELL!

SATHELINDE and her Company, who had listen’d with the utmost Attention to the Voice of this Unknown Fair, at first thought it had been LAURA, and her addressing herself to MARIANNE made them conclude that it was she; but her mentioning her distress’d Innocence, and calling out upon PHILOCELL soon convinc’d them of their Error, and made them know that it was no other than the unfortunate ASTERIA: They were all highly pleas’d at this Discovery, and contriv’d several Methods to get to the Speech of her; but after a long Consultation, attended with many Divisions,

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sions, as female Councils most commonly are, they could hit upon no Expedient so proper, as putting ashore in the Vessel, and detaching TIMOLEO to try, if he could get Admission to her. He very readily undertook it, having that true Esteem and Friendship for ASTERIA which a Man of Sense has for an agreeable and virtuous Woman; a Transport which it is impossible for Fools and Coxcombs to feel.

As he approach'd the Solitude, which this disconsolate Fair had chose out, he could not help admiring the rustic Simplicity and Beauty of the Place; that Part of it that fronted the River he had already observ'd; a Walk of stately Trees led from the Cottage to the little Summer-House, where they had heard her venting her Complaints: The cruel Axe, guided by the finical Hand of Art, but seldom lopp'd their luxuriant Branches,

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Branches, and they were left to wanton in all the unbounded Varieties of lavish Nature; the Walls of the Garden, which were more venerable for their Age than lofty, were overgrown with spreading Ivy, and in their solitary Groves, the roving Warblers of the Fields found a secure Asylum from the Hands of murdering Man, rejoicing in their Safety, and acting their little Loves without Fear of being disturb'd: Two ancient Yews fac'd the Entrance of the Walk, whence a less spritely Genius than OVID might have conceiv'd the Transformation of his BANCIS and PHILEMON; for this humble Cottage, like theirs, seem'd a fit Receptacle for wandering Deities when other Mortals were unworthy of them. When TIMOLEO had got round, he was no less delighted with the Avenues of this rustic Dwelling; it was conceal'd, as it were, in a Thicket, and though
the

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the main Road pass'd within three or four Hundred Paces, yet no Traveller could from thence descry this sequester'd Mansion; a thick Grove of small Trees shaded it from Sight and cast a pleasing awful Gloom over the winding Path that led up to the Gate; just before which stood a Knot of lofty Elms, whose aspiring Tops were tenanted by the Rooks that wing the Midway Air, whose discordant Tones are more pleasing to the Ear of Innocence, than all the borrow'd Harmony that ecchoes thro' the gilded Domes inhabited by Vice and Luxury.

By the Gate, which was arch'd over in the *Gothic* Stile, and the antique Appearance of the whole House, TIMOLEO soon discover'd it to have been formerly an Habitation for the Recluses of the Female Sex, in the Times when Monckery and Superstition prevail'd: He rang at the Door,

Door, and was receiv'd by a venerable old Gentleman, who afterwards prov'd to be the Master of this romantic Seat, and desiring to be conducted to MARIANNE was shewn into a Hall more plain and neat than grand and sumptuous: The Cieling was ornamented with different Figures in *Stucco*, and the Pannels adorn'd with several Sorts of antique Carv'd Work, the Tints of TITIAN, and the Pieces of the Divine RAPHAEL were here unknown, and a few Family Pictures were here carefully preserv'd from the Rage of devouring Time; TIMOLEO entertain'd himself with looking at these till MARIANNE came to him. He accosted her in a very tender Manner, and enquired after ASTERIA; the Maid started, thinking they were betray'd, and that somebody had discover'd the Place of their Retirement to PHILOCELL; He perceiv'd her Confusion,

L

and

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and endeavour'd to silence her distracted Apprehensions as well as he could.

“MADAM, said he, I come not
 “here to disturb the lovely ASTRÉ-
 “RIA’s Repose, or to disconcert
 “any Measures she may take: On
 “the contrary, all the Assistance in
 “my Power she may command, and
 “whatever the sincerest Friendship
 “can contribute to alleviate her
 “Griefs, shall be my Study to per-
 “form: It is to Chance that I am
 “indebted for the Knowledge of her
 “being here; and some of her
 “Friends, who accidentally heard
 “her Complaints as we came up by
 “Water, have deputed me to re-
 “quest the Favour of seeing her:
 “We have no Design of injuring or
 “discomposing her, but hope that
 “our Friendship may be the Means
 “of mitigating her Sorrows.”

MARI-

MARIANNE seem'd very loth to acknowledge that she was there, and would fain have perswaded him that he was mistaken; but he was so positive that he could not be deceiv'd, and so strenuously insisted upon seeing her, that at last she could not refuse carrying his Message, especially when he told her that he was sure if she acquainted her Mistress, that TIMOLEO was come to wait on her, she would not be averse to seeing him. When ASTERIA was informed who it was, a Thousand different Thoughts perplex'd her Breast; she knew him to be generous, open, and disinterested; but then she did not know, whether he was not bias'd by Misrepresentations, and directed by PHILOCELL to find her out, which she dreaded worse than Death; for after the repeated Slights he had shewn her, before her leaving him, she could expect nothing but the

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worst of Usage, yet her good Nature would not let her imagine that TIMOLEO could be so base; therefore after some Deliberation she resolv'd to see him.

WHEN he was admitted to her Chamber, she could not refrain shedding Tears, at the Sight of a Man who had been Eye-Witness to the many Indulgencies with which PHILOCELL had entertain'd her in the first Years of her being married, before Lust like a destroying Fiend broke in, and ravag'd their Paradise: At length, Tears having a little vented her Grief, her Words found Utterance: " I hope, Sir, said she, " you don't come to insult over my " Misfortunes, or by the Appoint- " ment of the cruel, perfidious PHI- " LOCELL, have assiduously search- " ed out this only Retreat I could " find for my Innocence, to drag " me to the hated Sight of a Man, " who

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“ who has injur’d me the deeper, as
“ in him I had center’d every Wish
“ of Happiness my Heart could
“ form.----- If you do, it is mean
“ and unmanly, and what I should
“ never have expected from TIMO-
“ LEO.----But, if you come to bring
“ me Consolation, or sympathize
“ with me in my Woes, such Wel-
“ come as the poor ASTERIA, lost
“ to the World can give, shall meet
“ your generous Purpose, and bless
“ you for the kind Office you in-
“ tend, and I doubt not but Heaven
“ will reward the glorious Deed, for
“ few in this degenerate Age are
“ hardy enough, to follow and ad-
“ minister Comfort to forsaken Vir-
“ tue.”

“ MADAM, replied TIMOLEO,
“ I scorn all base Collusion with an
“ Husband that could injure one of
“ your exalted Merit! I share in
“ your Distresses, and am pleas’d
“ that

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“ that Fortune has put it in my Po-
“ wer to shew how much I esteem
“ your Friendship, by offering my
“ Services to bring about a Recon-
“ ciliation between you and the Man
“ who has shewn himself unworthy
“ of your Charms by slighting them,
“ for which, I dare say, he is now
“ heartily sorry : And, could I see
“ that Union re-established !----

“ O H never ! cried A S T E R I A,
“ it is impossible the Heart that is
“ once chang'd like his, should ever
“ return to a due Sense of Affecti-
“ on ! Talk not of Charms, I ne-
“ ver had any to engage a Taste
“ so delicate, Let it suffice, his
“ happy Mistress has all that his
“ Fancy, in his utmost Wishes,
“ could paint. All I boasted was
“ a chearful Obedience to his Will,
“ and a Readiness to perform all
“ the Duties of a good and virtuous
“ Wife :--- Vain Wretch that I am !
“ Could

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“ Could I think to captivate the
“ gay, roving PHILOCELL by such
“ antiquated Merits ! ---- No, TI-
“ MOLEO, I am lost, abandon’d,
“ and forsaken ! and am determin’d
“ to spend the few Remains of a
“ wretched Life, in Ignorance of the
“ World, and in Obscurity. ---- Yet
“ one Thing I own disturbs me, it
“ is perhaps the Weakness of an ho-
“ nest Mind, but it is what must be
“ excus’d as it arises solely from a
“ conscious Innocence. ---- I own to
“ you, I am uneasy in regard to what
“ the censorious World may say of
“ this abrupt Departure of mine, I
“ know immortal Scandal soars aloft,
“ whilst humble Fame and Praise
“ creep submissively on the Earth,
“ and are liable to be spurn’d by e-
“ very vulgar Foot. --- Here, I con-
“ fess, I am nearly touch’d, and
“ stand in need of such a generous
“ Friend as yourself, to do Justice
“ to my Reputation ; --- but, sure,

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“ the barbarous Man cannot be so
 “ vile, as to asperse my Character,
 “ and cast a Shade on me to make
 “ his own Crimes seem light? If he
 “ has, I am wounded in the tender-
 “ est Part: There TIMOLEO exert
 “ your utmost Friendship, save the
 “ better Part of me from Ruin, and
 “ vindicate my Honour from the Re-
 “ flections of the Malicious; --- but
 “ yet be careful, hurt not the dear
 “ faithless PHILOCELI in me; say,
 “ I am innocent, but do not, do not
 “ disclose the Half of my Suffer-
 “ ings.”

“ I NEED not, Madam, replied
 “ he, the World is too well acquaint-
 “ ed with them already; even the
 “ Thoughtless and the Gay, the ro-
 “ ving Libertine, and the censorious
 “ Prude, all compassionate you, and
 “ blame the Author of your Woes.--
 “ Your Retreat is no longer a Secret
 “ in Town, or the Cause that occa-
 “ sion'd

“ sion’d it, though the Particulars
“ are not fully known, yet there are
“ Proofs sufficient to acquit you, and
“ condemn PHILOCELL. I am not
“ the only one that has bemoan’d
“ your Loss, and been anxious to
“ find out your Retreat; S A T H E-
“ L I N D E and some other of your
“ female Friends have made it their
“ Business for some Days past, but
“ what all our Industry could not at-
“ tain to, a lucky Chance has within
“ this Hour effected. We have made
“ a small Party of Pleasure, and ac-
“ cidentally passing under your Sum-
“ mer-house in our Barge, heard
“ your well known plaintive Voice:
“ They sent me to know your Plea-
“ sure, if they might have Leave to
“ wait on you, and now expect my
“ Return to give them that Satisfac-
“ tion which they have a long Time
“ ardently wish’d for.”

“ S A-

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“ SATHELINDE ! cries ASTERIA
“ in a Surprize, then I am betray’d
“ indeed, and it cannot long remain
“ a Secret ; for her Acquaintance
“ commenc’d through my Huf-
“ band’s Means, and she certainly
“ will take his Part.”

“ INDEED, Madam, replied TI-
“ MOLEO, she is far otherwise, and
“ much more your Friend than his,
“ as you will be convinc’d, if you
“ will only permit me to conduct
“ her and the Company hither.”

“ OH TIMOLEO, cried the in-
“ jured Fair, do not play upon my
“ easy Credulity ; tho’ you may
“ mean me well, you may be decei-
“ ved in the Intentions of others :
“ The World is all a Lottery, and
“ a true Friend is an inestimable
“ Prize that is seldom drawn ?---But
“ why should I distrust her ? I never
“ receiv’d

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“ receiv’d any Injury from her,--- I
“ hope you will pardon this sudden
“ Sally which my Doubts occasion-
“ ed, and impute it to the Perplexi-
“ ty of my Mind; for since PHILO-
“ CELL has broke down the Barri-
“ ers of Truth and Faith, whom else
“ can I confide in? No, let all Vows
“ henceforward to be made be no
“ Obligation or Tie on any one, but
“ let all Order run Riot to Confu-
“ sion. --- Forgive my involuntary
“ Raving, good TIMOLEO; let them
“ come, and if they prove true to
“ Friendship ’twill be a Cordial to
“ my aching Heart, and like the
“ banish’d TIMON, I shall in this
“ Solitude have found a Treasure of
“ more Worth than the ungrateful
“ City can purchase: Go, and tell
“ them the unhappy ASTERIA is
“ willing to try if Friendship can
“ alleviate the severest Pangs of Sor-
“ row.”

Ti-

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TIMOLEO, glad that he had got her Consent for the Ladies to visit her, flew with Impatience to the Water-side, and told them the Success of his Embassy; they were preparing to land, and go the same Way that TIMOLEO did, when they were stopp'd by MARIANNE, who followed him almost out of Breath to tell them, that her Lady was apprehensive the Coming of so many People through Part of the Village, where they must necessarily pass, would occasion much Inquiry, and therefore she begg'd they would put back in the Barge to the Summer-house, where there was a private Pair of Stairs, and they might land in the Garden without being perceiv'd: --- They readily obey'd her Commands, and ASTERIA was there to receive them.

No-

NOTHING, says the *Persian Proverb*, brightens the Countenance like the Presence of a Friend to one in Affliction: And the Sight of so many of her Acquaintance certainly gave ASTERIA an unspeakable Pleasure: They dissipated the Clouds of Grief that had too long obscur'd her lovely Eyes, and she began to taste some Comfort, which she had before been a Stranger to, yet her Wrongs would still rise up in her Remembrance.— The Company was loth to say any Thing to her upon that Head, lest it should disconcert the Mirth with which they endeavour'd to entertain her, though they were all desirous to know what had befallen her during her Absence; and ASTERIA thinking this would be a proper Opportunity to acquit herself from any Crime the World might lay to her Charge, having recover'd her Spirits

volun-

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voluntarily satisfied their Curiosity,
without giving them the Trouble
of requesting it, in the following
Manner:

And the sight of so many
of her Acquaintance certainly gave
ASTORIA an unpeakable Pleasure:
They dispersed the Clouds of Grief
that had too long obscur'd her lovely
Eyes, and she began to taste some
Comfort which she had before been
a stranger to. Wrongs would
still rise up to vex her.

The Cause of her Distress was
any Thing that she should be
with which they could not entertain
her, though they were all desirous
to know what had befallen her du-
ring her Absence; and ASTORIA
thinking this would be a proper Op-
portunity to acquaint herself with any
Change the World might lay to her
Charge, having recover'd her Spi-rit

THE

convinc'd that there many Women
in the World who would think my
* * * * *

Things of Course and trivial; but to
one that loves like me, the least
Slight or seeming Disgrace is Death

HISTORY

OF
ASTORIA.

and give me up a Prey to waiting

WERE it not, Ladies, for
the Infirmary of Noble
Minds, which makes us anxious
what Regard the World pays to our
Memories after we are gone, I should
not trouble you with a Recital of my
Actions, nor raise that Horror in my
Breast which the bare Recollection
of my past Happiness, and the
Heights I am fallen from, must ne-
cessarily occasion: I am very well
convinc'd

convinc'd that there many Women in the World who would think my Injuries light, and pass them over as Things of Course and trivial; but to one that loves like me, the least Slight, or seeming Disgust, is Death attended with the severest Agonies. I am of a Temper that cannot brook Scorn, or Neglect, and those Wrongs which others of my Sex would revenge on the Aggressors, bear me down with a heavy Weight of Woe, and give me up a Prey to wasting Sighs and pale-pining Grief.

IMAGINE then with yourselves, Ladies; how hard it must be for me to be depriv'd of a Happiness which I had long been in Possession of, and thought myself secure in when I least expected it: I was so unfashionable as to find more Comforts in the Conversation of my Husband than in all the Hurry of the most brilliant and polite Assemblies, and was really so
stupid

stupid as to imagine that a Woman of Sense might find Amusements enough in her own Family without seeking any from abroad: My whole Happiness was center'd in pleasing him, and I had not a Wish or Thought that he was a Stranger to. How simple was I to fancy that plain Virtue alone could charm in an Age that so discountenances it? Or, that the Endearments of a Wife could secure the Affections of a Man, whom so many great Examples daily excite to Lewdness and Prodigality? It was a meer chimerical Foundation of Bliss, when *Adultery* becomes not only venial but fashionable, to pretend to Virtue is to render ourselves obnoxious to our Neighbours. Why then should I imagine Heaven had greater Happiness in Store for me, than for the rest of Womankind? No: It was a vain Presumption, and that Husband, who for several Years behav'd with a tender Fond-

M

ness

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ness to me scarce to be parallell'd,
has at length deserted my Arms, and
left me to utter my unavailing Com-
plaints to the remorseless Winds :---
This then, Ladies, is the Cause of
my seeking out this Solitude and ma-
king myself a voluntary Exile from
the Town, and all its noisy tumultu-
ous Delight. When I have related
the Particulars of my Conduct, and
the Aggravations I have receiv'd, if
hereafter my Name is mention'd, do
my Fame that Justice which Friend-
ship demands, and rescue it from the
rude Tongues of Libellers and Tale-
bearers. Let me first repeat the Series
of my Happiness, which like the Vi-
sion past softens the Horror of my
present State : ---- Yes, my PHILO-
CELL, let me paint me all lovely as
thou wert in the fond Endearments
of our Virgin Loves, when Truth
spontaneous flow'd from thy Lips,
and I with glad Attention lean'd on
thy Breast, listening with Rapture to
every

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every tender Word you spoke : Then Life flow'd calmly on like an unruffled Stream, e'er the rude Tempest furrow'd its smooth Bosom and lashed its Waves into a Foam.

OUR Marriage was not, like most modern Ones, the rash Result of our Parents Avarice without consulting our Inclinations ; for we were bred up in a Manner from Infancy together, and there was all along so good an Understanding between our Families, that there wanted nothing but PHILOCELL's marrying me to make our Alliance nearer : This Friendship had subsisted without any Interruption, even from the Time of our Grandfathers going to School together, and had never once been interrupted by any Jarrings or Discontents. I mention this because I believe it is hard to find a parallel Case in this Age, where most Societies seem form'd upon Interest only, and

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when that interferes with their Friendships, the mutual Tie is instantly dissolv'd. But with us it was far otherwise, and I never once remember those little Bickerings and Disputes to have happen'd between our Parents as are usual amongst the most intimate Acquaintance; but none will doubt the Truth of what I say who knew PHILOCELL's Father, the great, the good JUSTINIAN.

PARDON me, Ladies, that I pause a-while, to shed Tears at the Remembrance of that venerable Shade: If the Publick mourn'd his Death as a Loss to the Community in general, I have much more Reason to bewail it in particular. He might justly be stil'd, the Delight of Mankind, the Refuge of the Distressed, and the Protector of Innocence: Where now shall the Widow apply for one to guard her Rights? Where shall the helpless Orphans find a Person

son to save their Patrimonies from the Grasp of false encroaching Guardians? The Monarch in vain laments the Loss of his best Counsellor, and the Subject the only Defender of his antient and undoubted Privileges: --- Who like him will dare to stem the Torrent of Oppression, and prevent Majesty from swelling up to Tyranny? --- He died unhappily for ALBION when his Country stood in most Need of his Assistance; and (as if my private Misfortunes were destin'd to bear Part with the Publick) just at the Time when PHILOCELL, grown weary of the nuptial Tie, began to seek fresh Adventures. But before I relate any of his Misconduct, let me do Justice to his Virtues.

I WAS very young when my own Father died and left me to JUSTINIAN's Care, and by his Indulgence I had little Reason to complain of the

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Loss of my Parents; I was taken home to his House, and treated in every Respect as one of his own Family; PHILOCELL was then upon his Travels, which JUSTINIAN took Care should not be like our other young Men of Quality, who can give you a particular Account of the Post Chaises they travel in, but know no more of the Country than the senseless Animals that carry them; on the contrary, PHILOCELL was accompanied by a Gentleman who knew Men and Manners as well as the Names of Cities, and was capable of instructing him in the Religions, Policies, Laws and Customs of the several Places and Nations they passed through.

WHILST he was thus qualifying himself abroad for the high Rank he was to appear in, I was educated at Home in a suitable Manner to become his Wife, for the good JUSTI-
NIAN,

NIAN, tho' he determin'd not to bar his Freedom of Choice, yet said he would try all gentle Methods to bring about an Event, which he knew would be agreeable to the whole Family as well as himself in particular; for he had no Daughter of his own, and the rest of his Sons began to esteem me as naturally as if I had been their Sister; and his Lady being dead, I was very early introduc'd into the Management of the Family, throughout the whole of which there was not the least grumbling or repining, but every Servant from the highest to the lowest knew their distinct Business, and perform'd it cheerfully. So prevalent was the Force of a good Example that JUSTINIAN, who notwithstanding the Fatigues of his high Station, was never known to be ruffled, or put out of Temper at any Accident, diffus'd a Spirit of Benignity through the whole Family.

How different was this Harmony from the Discord that reign'd in the House of his Neighbour MONTALTO, there, every Face appear'd with Discontent, and even the Master himself supported the Load of Grandeur with a visible Uneasiness. As we were the Envy and Admiration of the whole Town, so they were the Jest and Scorn of it.--- PHILOCELL as he was the eldest Son and Heir to the Estate, was sought for a Match with their Daughters by several of the First Rank, and amongst the rest by this MONTALTO. He applied to JUSTINIAN upon that Head before his Son came Home, but he excused himself in an handsome Manner, telling him, that his Son was already as good as contracted to his little brown Girl, (as he call'd me.) I happen'd accidentally to over-hear him give this Answer, and must confess that my Heart, at
that

that Time not at all vers'd in Love, felt a Kind of pleasing Pain at the Mention of it, and tho' I had not seen PHILOCELL for upwards of three Years, I found I had given him Possession of my Heart before he came to demand it; all I fear'd was, lest he should see some Beauty abroad that might make me look indifferent in his Eyes, and I was daily tormenting myself with finding out Defects in my Person, which I was apprehensive would make him refuse me, though the flattering World persuaded me that I was then far from being disagreeable; yet I was so conscious of my own Demerits, that I did not think I had Charms enough to claim the Esteem of one, whom in my own Fancy I had painted so lovely as PHILOCELL.

At length, the Time appointed for his making the Tour of EUROPE being past, the accomplish'd Youth

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Youth arriv'd from his Travels. We did not know of the particular Moment he would come, though we expected him every Day; so that it was still a Sort of Surprize to us, but to me more especially. He arriv'd one Morning whilst we were at the Service of the Temple, I did not see him for some Time after I came in, and went down into the Parlour without being appriz'd of it, and seeing a Stranger there was going to withdraw, when JUSTINIAN call'd to me and told me, there was a Gentleman would be glad to pay his Complements to me: I felt an unusual Thrilling at my Heart, as I enter'd the Room, which I could not account for; but when I saw it was PHILOCELL, I was no longer able to contain myself: The sudden Surprize seiz'd me so strongly that I fainted away in his Arms; the generous Youth seated me on a Chair, and in a little Time they recover'd
my

my wandering Senses, when I came to myself I could not help viewing him with an Astonishment little inferior to Adoration. I thought him the most agreeable Object that had ever charm'd my Eyes, and indeed my simple Maid like me might have done the same; for his Person which is exceeded by few was adorn'd with the elegant Gaiety which is peculiar to Foreigners above our Nation, and he then appear'd in a Dress which was made up for him at PARIS; on the Birth-Day of the Grand Monarch: He was in a very rich Suit of Cloaths embroider'd with Gold; a white Feather in his Hat, and a fine Tassel of Barbary Work to his Sword, and if he has since chose to dress in a plainer Manner, it was more out of Love to the Custom of his own Country, and to discourage too much Countenance given to Foreigners than any Inelegance in his Taste; for the Fop was a Character
bolden that

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that he never assum'd, tho' he had every Requisite that constitute the fine Gentleman.

IF I was enamour'd with him at first View, he has since inform'd me that he was no less so with me: He hath often said, that notwithstanding the Allurements practis'd by the Coquets of FRANCE, and the Fondness of the ITALIAN Ladies for Amours, there was something in them that must seem frothy and insipid to a Man of Sense, and he saw in my little Share of Beauty such a Woman as in Idea he had often wish'd to be his Wife, if ever he married.

JUSTINIAN perceiv'd our Transports, and the Confusion we were both in, for we were at a Loss to salute each other as we ought: He order'd the rest of the Company to withdraw, saying, he had something to impart to us in private. My Heart trembled

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trembled with the Apprehension of what was to ensue, yet with a longing Expectation that it would be perfectly agreeable to my Wishes.

WHEN we were alone JUSTINIAN took me by the Hand, and address'd himself to PHILOCELL in the following Manner: " My Son, " said he, receive this Lady as one " whom I have pitch'd upon to be " your Bride, and one whom I am " sure you can have no Objection to, " otherwise I should not be so peremptory in my Command; for " notwithstanding I lay so strict an " Injunction on you, and attack you " upon an Affair of such Consequence " so soon after your Arrival, yet as I " know that it is Freedom of Choice " which sweetens Life, I would not " deprive you of that which Nature " has bestowed on all Creatures in " common. ---- No, far be it from " me to fetter your Imagination, or
" pre-

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“ prescribe a Rule to your Affections ;
 “ yet let me make Use of a Father’s
 “ Priviledge, if your Heart be not
 “ pre-ingaged, to recommend A s-
 “ T E R I A to you as a Lady every
 “ way qualified to deserve you for a
 “ Husband ; her Charms are such as
 “ might invigorate Age, and melt
 “ the frozen Hermit to desire ; let me
 “ tell you too, that I have reserved
 “ her as a precious Gem against your
 “ Arrival ; for there are several noble
 “ Youths who at this Time sigh for
 “ the Favour, that is frankly offer’d
 “ you ; her Fortune is equal to Your’s,
 “ and there is no formal Treaty to be
 “ made by way of Bargain and Sale,
 “ no Consent to be ask’d but mine,
 “ who am the common Father to
 “ you both : — Besides, this puts
 “ me in Mind of a stronger Tie
 “ which claims your Regard, and
 “ attacks you upon the Point of Ge-
 “ nerosity. Her dying Father, who
 “ was my second Self, united to me
 “ by

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“ by the strictest Bands of Friendship,
“ bequeathed her to me on his Death-
“ bed. He left her a young and
“ helpless Orphan; I have done my
“ Duty, and as in Law the first de-
“ volves to you after my Death, so
“ does it in Reason too, let her not
“ then be deserted when I am gone,
“ but as Friendship hath already
“ made her a Part of our Family, do
“ you confirm it by a nearer Tie. I
“ will not expect your immediate
“ Answer, but give you Time to
“ think of it.”

HE paused, — and PHILOCELE
tenderly embracing me, answered
him thus: “ There is no Room for
“ Hesitation, Sir, where a Mind is
“ so fully resolved as mine is, and
“ ASTERIA had certainly found a
“ Place in my Heart, if I had not
“ had the Sanction of so good a Fa-
“ ther’s Authority for my Love, as
“ it is my ready Obedience to com-
ply

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“ ply with whatever you shall com-
“ mand, can only shew how much
“ she is Mistress of my Soul, and
“ my future Behaviour shall testify,
“ how happy such a Wife can make
“ a Man that knows how to esteem
“ her Worth, as he ought.”

NOT to detain you any longer with the tedious Formalities which usually accompany Courtship, and which though very agreeable to young Lovers, lose much of their Pleasantry by a Description. I will cut it short by telling you, that after mutual Vows of Fondness and Affection, and the Time being wasted that Decency required our Nuptials were solemnized, in the Presence of the good JUSTINIAN, who that Day seem'd to be more than ordinarily joyful at seeing the Union, which he so much desired, compleated. HYMEN in those soft Hours, revelled in all the Extravagancies of innocent Mirth, and
nothing

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nothing but Joy and Pleasure was diffused through every Heart, the rosy coloured God in all his Excursions never saw more Harmony and Content.

PHILOCELL before our Marriage had laid aside all his foreign Airs, and was determined to apply himself more particularly to obtain the Qualifications necessary to suit him for the high Honours he might reasonably expect to wear after his Father's Death; JUSTINIAN beheld this Change in him with a Satisfaction visible to every Body, and after we had been married about a Week, he took an Opportunity when he and I were alone together to speak to me in the following Manner: "My dear Daughter, you are by this Time
"satisfy'd how much the Tender-
"ness of one Man of Merit is to
"be preferr'd to the Addresses of
"a Thousand. And by this Time,

N

PHI-

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“ PHILOCELL whom you have
“ made Choice of is sensible, how
“ great is the Joy of having all those
“ Charms and good Qualities which
“ have pleased so many now applied
“ to one only. It was but just, that
“ the same Virtues which gave you
“ Reputation should give you Happi-
“ ness, and I can wish you no greater
“ than that you may receive it in as
“ high a Degree yourself, as so much
“ good Humour must infallibly give
“ it to your Husband.

“ I AM more a Well-wisher to
“ your Felicity than a Celebrator of
“ your Beauty; besides you are now
“ a married Woman, and in a Way
“ to be a great many better Things
“ than a fine Lady; such as an ex-
“ cellent Wife, a faithful Friend, a
“ tender Parent, and at last as the
“ Consequence of them all a Saint
“ in Heaven; you ought now to
“ hear Nothing but that (which
“ was

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“ was all you ever desired to hear;
“ whatever others may have spoken
“ to you) I mean Truth, and it is
“ with the utmost Sincerity I assure
“ you, no Friend you have, can more
“ rejoice in any Good that befalls you,
“ is more delighted with the Prospect
“ of your future Happiness, or more
“ unfeignedly desires a long Conti-
“ nuance of it :--- But Youth is frail
“ ASTERIA, your Husband is gay
“ and spritely, his Inclinations may
“ wary, take therefore a Word of
“ Advice from me : --- Whatever
“ Faults you may discover in him
“ be blind to them, let him find out
“ his Error himself rather than be
“ appriz'd of it from you, but if
“ he obstinately pursues ill Courses,
“ Solitude and Friendship are all you
“ can have Recourse to. Above all
“ Things be so careful of your own
“ Conduct, that he shall not have
“ the least Opening to find Fault
“ with you. I know not, that this

Know

N 2

“ is

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“ is likely to happen, but I fear he
“ is not altogether Proof against
“ Temptation, keep what I have said
“ to you a Secret, and if ever you
“ should be so unhappy as to stand
“ in need of the Counsel I have
“ given you, follow it exactly.”

— WHEN I reflected afterwards on what JUSTINIAN had said, I was rack'd with a Thousand wild imaginary Torments; I fancied he had observed something unsteady in my Husband's Behaviour, that had induc'd him to arm me with that Precaution; but no sooner did the dear Youth come in Sight, than all my Fears and Horrors vanished; he said and did so many tender engaging Things, that I thought it a Crime next to Infidelity to imagine him false.

AND for three or four Years my Happiness was so compleat, that I
would

would not have wish'd to exchange my Station with a Goddess. Oh! I was too blest, and drank such delicious Draughts of Transport down, that the rich Cup intoxicated my Senses. When in the Height of all my Heaven, Death suddenly depriv'd us of the great JUSTINIAN, his Zeal for his Country hurried his Spirits to such an Excess, and oppress'd him with so many Fatigues that it was impossible for Nature to sustain them. An Affair, the most interesting to the Kingdom of ALBION that could happen to come upon the Carpet: It was disputed whether a Fortress, which was in itself impregnable, and by which they held the Dominion of the watry Element should be given up to the Enemy or Not; some perfidious Statesmen, who consulted their own private Emolument more than the Advantage of their Country, were for surrendring it immediately, but this good Man who

always preferred the Good of the Community to any private Consideration whatsoever, strenuously opposed it, and with such prevailing Eloquence and Force of Reason that he at length brought the Others into his Way of Thinking ; but the Triumph though in the Cause of Justice cost him dear, for with that Debate, and attending the Duty of his Office, he had no Rest for three Days and Nights. This joined with some little low Insults which were offer'd him by the Man, who of all others should have cherish'd so faithful a Counsellor, hasten'd his End.

THE Grief I had before felt for the Death of my own Father was nothing to what I then endured ; and from the Day the good JUSTINIAN was intomb'd, I may date the Æra of my Unhappiness ; for PHILOCELL transported beyond the Bounds of Reason, by the new Acquisition of Wealth

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Wealth and Honour which devolv'd to him by the Death of his Father, began to be more gay and thoughtless. He had some time before this contracted an Intimacy with Don DANDIN and his Lady who had not been long married, I knew no more of them than common Visitors, and as such frequently entertained them, but I must confess the very first Time I saw LIBERTINA, the Freedom with which she express'd herself, as to the Duties of Life, and several other Liberties which she took, gave me no very favourable Idea of her; I judg'd her to be a Lady who would not let a Man sigh long for the last Favour, and the Event has too well justified my Suspicions.

NOTWITHSTANDING I had entertain'd so bad an Opinion of LIBERTINA, (pardon me, Ladies, but the very Repetition of the Name

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makes me shudder) though in my own Mind I conceiv'd her to be one that gave a free Indulgence to every Vice her Passion led her to; yet Love had so lull'd asleep my discerning Faculties that I never once mistrusted her with PHILOCELL; happy had I been if I had still remained in the same State of Ignorance, but cruel Chance too soon made me sensible of my Misfortune. I had observ'd that she visited us oftner than usual, as likewise that my Husband let me have less of his Company than I had before JUSTINIAN'S Death. This indeed gave me some Uneasiness, for I was such a doating fond Fool, that I could share in no Joys unless he was present.

DON DANDIN and his Spouse came to pay us a Visit, and take their Leave of us before they went out of Town, what seem'd very odd to me,

me, and gave me great Disgust, was, that the Lady took no Notice of me, but pay'd all her Court to PHILOCELL, who methought behaved with a cautious Reserve, and utter'd every Word he spoke with great Deliberation, as if he fear'd something should escape him which he would willingly conceal. This Visit alarm'd me very much, and fill'd me with a thousand dismal Apprehensions; I then recollected the sage Advice which JUSTINIAN had given me, and put a Constraint on myself resolving to take no Notice of what pass'd, or let my Husband see that I was, in the least uneasy; my behaving in this manner, I believe made him not so much upon his Guard as he otherwise would have been, and open'd the Way to my discovering a Secret which since has prov'd fatal to my Quiet.

THEY

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THEY took their Leave of us, and I could perceive that PHILOCCELL in handing her to her Coach whisper'd something in her Ear, which she returned with a Smile, and a familiar Tap of the Cheek ; I thought these Liberties were indecent in a married Woman, but it seems my Notions are unfashionable and vulgar, and this and much more is daily practis'd by Women of the first Rank.

WHILST they were in the Country I had much more of my Husband's Company, and the Pleasure I took in that enabled me to stifle my rising Sighs. I redoubled my Affiduity to please him, and always met him with the Cheerfulness of an obedient loving Wife ; in short had he continued so, I should have silenc'd my Suspicions in their Growth, nor have enquired whether

I had been wrong'd or not; but without my searching for it a flagrant Instance of his Falsehood stared me full in the Face; I went into his Study one Morning to speak to him about some Business relating to the Family; He was gone out to take a Turn in the Garden, the Door was open, and he had carelessly left a Letter unsealed upon his Desk, the Superscription of which excited my Curiosity to look into the Contents. I had no sooner open'd it than I stood like one transform'd into a Statue, and was sometime before I could recover myself to be able to read it through; it was lucky that he did not come and find me there, for if he had I don't know what the Violence of his Temper might have hurried him to, for tho' he is endow'd with as much Good Nature as any Man, yet he is sometimes hurried by Gusts of Passion into the wildest Extravagancies.

Yet

Yet not considering this, I was so deprived of my Reason that taking it thence I went into my own Chamber, and copied it, as expeditiously as I could, and return'd it to the Place where I had found it, and retired without being perceived by Him. Here is the Copy, which I have carefully preserved, as a Proof of my being injur'd, and when I have read it to Ye, Ladies, I will leave Ye, to judge whether any one in my Condition could be blamed for taking the Steps I have since done.

*To the Divine Empress of my Soul,
the Transporting LIBERTINA.*

Most Lovely Fair One,

“ I T is too much a Rule in this
“ Town, that when a Woman
“ has once done a Man a Favour, he
“ is

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“ is to be rude to her ever after. It
“ becomes our Sex to take upon us
“ twice as much as Your's allows
“ us; by this Method I may write
“ to you most impudently, because
“ you once answer'd me modestly;
“ and if you should never do me
“ that Honour for the future, I am
“ apt to think, like a true Coxcomb,
“ that Silence gives Consent: Per-
“ haps, you may wonder why this
“ is address'd to you, rather than to
“ LAURA, with whom I have the
“ Right of an old Acquaintance:—
“ Whereas you are a fine Lady, have
“ bright Eyes, &c. &c. &c. ”

“ FIRST, Madam, I make Choice
“ of You rather than your Mother,
“ because You are younger than your
“ Mother. Secondly, Because I
“ fancy you spell better, as having
“ been at School later. Thirdly,
“ Because you have nothing to do
“ but to write, if You please, and
“ possi-

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“ possibly it may keep You from
“ employing Yourself worse : It may
“ save some honest neighbouring
“ Gentleman from three or four of
“ Your pestilent Glances.

“ CAST Your Eyes upon Paper,
“ Madam, there You may look in-
“ nocently ; Men are seducing,
“ Books are dangerous ; the amo-
“ rous Ones soften You, and the
“ godly Ones give You the Spleen :
“ If You look upon Trees they clasp
“ in Embraces : Birds and Beasts
“ make Love ; the Sun is too warm
“ for Your Blood ; the Moon melts
“ You into Yielding and Melancho-
“ ly. Therefore, I say, once more
“ cast Your Eyes upon Paper, and
“ read only such Letters as I write,
“ which convey no Darts, no Flames ;
“ but proceed from Innocence of Soul
“ and Simplicity of Heart. Howe-
“ ver, I can allow You a Bonnet li-
“ ned with Green for Your Eyes,
“ but

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“ but take Care You don't tarnish it,
“ by ogling too fiercely; I am told
“ the Hand You shade Yourself
“ with this shining Weather is tan-
“ ned pretty much, only with be-
“ ing carried over those Eyes,-----
“ Thank God, I am an Hundred
“ Miles off from them. Upon the
“ Whole, I would sooner trust Your
“ Hand, than Your Eyes for doing
“ me Mischief; and though I doubt
“ not some Part of the Rancour and
“ Iniquity of Your Heart will drop
“ into Your Pen, - yet since it will
“ not attack me on a sudden and
“ unprepar'd; since I may have
“ Time, while I am breaking open
“ Your Letter, to say a short Ejacu-
“ lation, I hope Providence will pro-
“ tect me from all You can attempt
“ at this Distance.

“ YOUR Brother-in-law NOL-
“ LITIO tells me, You are at this
“ Hour as handsome as an Angel;
“ for

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“ for my Part I have forgot Your
“ Face since two long Months. I
“ don’t know whether You are tall
“ or short, nor can tell in any Re-
“ spect what Sort of Creature You
“ are, only that You are a mischie-
“ vious one, whom I shall ever pray
“ to be defended from.

“ B U T when NOLLITO sends
“ me Word You have the Small-
“ Pox, a good many Freckles, or are
“ very pale, I will desire him to give
“ Thanks for it in Your Parish-
“ Church, which as soon as he shall
“ inform me he has done, I will
“ make You a Visit at * * * * *
“ without Armour: I will eat any
“ Thing You give me without Sus-
“ picion of Poison, take You by the
“ Hand without Gloves; nay, ven-
“ ture to follow You into an Arbour
“ without calling the Company.

“ T H I S,

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“ THIS, Madam, is the Top of
“ my Wishes, but how differently
“ are our Desires inclin’d! You sigh
“ out in the Ardour of Your Heart,
“ Oh! Playhouses, Parks, Opera’s
“ and Assemblies! I cry with Rap-
“ ture, Oh Woods, Gardens, Roo-
“ keries, Fish-ponds, Arbours, LI-
“ BERTINA! But, while I thus
“ rave and doat, I alas am married,
“ and You live with Your Husband.
“ Guess what I would say next, and
“ conclude me

Your Eternal Admirer,

PHILOCELL.

THIS Letter, continu’d ASTE-
RIA, was a Confirmation of his
Guilt, and too plainly discover’d that
my Misery was approaching; and to
confirm it, Fortune so order’d it that
about

about this Time MARIANNE having quitted LAURA's Service, applied to me to be taken into mine. I readily embrac'd the Opportunity of engaging a Servant, who I thought could let me into the whole Secret of an Affair so nearly concerning me as this was; I took her immediately into the Family without consulting my Husband, who though, I believe, he did not approve of it within himself, yet did not care to thwart my Inclinations so openly, as he must have done, if he had said any Thing about it. She let me into such a Scene of Intrigue, and which had been so long and so secretly carried on, that my worst Apprehensions could not have suggested any Thing like it; the bare Remembrance of which so disorders me, that I am unable to pursue my Relation farther: I must therefore beg to be excus'd, Ladies, and desire you to permit my Woman to entertain you with the Remainder of

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a Story, the Repetition of which would fill me with Horror, whilst I retire and compose myself a little, that I may be the better able to accompany you the rest of the Day.

“ COME, come, says A T H E-
“ N A I S, we will not suffer you to
“ indulge this Melancholy; now we
“ have found you, we will not part
“ with you again in Haste. We
“ came out to be merry, and I am
“ determin’d you shall bear a Part
“ with us: We will take no Denial,
“ but you shall positively go with us
“ to SATHELINDE’S Villa. If there-
“ fore you have a Mind to go and
“ dress, I will go with you, for So-
“ litude is the worst Thing in the
“ World for you in your Situation:
“ I know the Story too well, and
“ have no Curiosity to hear a Thing
“ repeated, that upon your Account
“ is so irksome to me; but that need
“ not hinder the rest of the Com-
“ pany

O 2

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“pany, so your Woman may entertain them whilst I attend you.”

ASTERIA, finding they all agreed to this Proposal, thought it would be in vain to dispute, and being willing to divert her Sorrow as much as possible, at last, agreed to take Share in their Mirth, and make one in their Party of Pleasure; and MARIANNE, in order to entertain the Company as agreeably as she could, led them to the Grotto in the Garden, which being something very beautiful in its Kind may afford Pleasure in the Description of it.

IT was in the Middle of the Garden. A Spring of the clearest Water, which fell in a perpetual Rill, ecchoed through the Cavern, Day and Night. From the River you might see through an Arch up a Walk of the Wilderness, to a Kind of an open Temple, wholly composed

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sed of Shells in the rustic Manner, and from that Distance under the Temple, you might look down thro' a sloping Arcade of Trees, and see the Sails on the River passing suddenly and vanishing as thro' a Perspective Glass. When the Doors of the Grotto are shut, it becomes in an Instant from a luminous Room, a *Camera Obscura*: On the Walls of which, all the Objects of the River, Hills, Woods, and Boats, are forming a moveable Picture in their visible Radiations, and when you have a Mind to light it up it forms a very different Scene: It is finish'd with Shells, interspers'd with Pieces of Looking-glass in angular Forms; and in the Cieling is a Star of the same Materials, at which when a Lamp of an orbicular Form of thin Alabaster, is hung in the Middle, a Thousand pointed Rays glitter, and are reflected over the Place. There are connected to this Grotto by a narrower

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Passage two Porches, with Niches and Seats; one towards the River of smooth Stones, full of Light, and open; the other towards the Arch of Trees, rough with Shells, Flints and Iron Ore. The Bottom is pav'd with simple Pebbles, as the adjoining Walk up the Wilderness to the Temple is of Cockle-shells in the natural Taste, agreeing not ill with the little dripping Murmur, and the aquatic Idea of the whole Place.

SATHELINDE inform'd MARTIANNE what the Count CARVILLE had related to them concerning LIBERTINA, and the Company being seated, she continu'd the Narration as followeth:

THE



T H E

HISTORY of *Libertina*,

From Her

Marriage with Don *Dandin*

To the Time of their Divorce.

SINCE you tell me, Ladies, that you have already been made acquainted with LIBERTINA's Amour with BENITO, and all that pass'd relating to her to the Time of her Marriage. I shall begin from the Wedding-Day, at which I was present as an Attendant upon LAURA; but as there is something previous to this, which though not immediately appertaining to LIBERTINA, yet concerns some Part of the Family very nearly, and in fine was the Means of her committing the most criminal

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Excesses, even before she had been married three Days.

THIS BENITO then you must know, who was so great a Favourite of Miss was no less belov'd by One of the Family, who as she had more Experience should have shewn more Prudence in concealing her Passion, but such is the Infatuation with which the blind Deity prepossesses us, that some Weakness or other always betrays a violent Desire, and it is impossible to keep that a Secret which of all Things in the World ought to be so, ; LAURA could not help discovering her Inclinations in this Respect : For Miss was no sooner sent to her Guardian's, than this favour'd Footman, upon a proper Submission to his Lady, and asking Pardon for his Offence, was again taken into the House. With a Blush I confess to you, that I myself felt a secret Pleasure at his Re-ad-
self

mission, but when I saw for what Purpose it was brought about Indignation wean'd my Heart from the foolish Pain, which it had occasion'd itself.

MY near Attendance upon LAURA made me privy to such Familiarities that I dreaded the Consequence, and was extremely anxious for her Reputation. She was at that Time address'd by HORATIO a Gentleman of great Honours, and of an Ancient Family, whose Estate too had been very considerable, but unhappily for him, when he was young and unexperienc'd in the World, he fell into the Hands of Sharpers, and being deeply concern'd in the Bubbles, when they were the prevailing Fashion, and not being allow'd by the Managers of those Frauds to come in as a CROUPIER, his Patrimony suffer'd very much, and he was oblig'd to dip great Part of it to make up the Deficiency of his Shares,

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Shares. LAURA had a very considerable Jointure, besides an immense Sum of ready Money left her by her deceased Husband; and HORATIO thought if he could marry her, it would not only give him Possession of an agreeable Wife, but make all his Affairs very easy. Poor Gentleman! He was of too bashful a Disposition to succeed with a Lady so sprightly and gay as she was; for besides the secret Succours which she received from BENITO enabled the Fort to hold out with the greater Obstinacy. HORATIO attack'd her in a Manner that he could scarce expect a Surrender, instead of endeavouring to make himself appear amiable in her Sight, he thought to shame her into Compliance, and caus'd it to be put into the public Papers that he was married to her, before he had made her any Proposition of that Sort; LAURA was very much incens'd at this, and immediately sent
to

to the Printer to contradict it, and to acquaint the Public that such a Report was entirely groundless. HORATIO finding his chimerical Scheme did not take the desir'd Effect, by a prodigious Fetch of Policy, contradicted the Report likewise, with an Insinuation, that it was spread by LAURA with a Design to prejudice Him: And thus this mighty Courtship was begun, and ended in less than a Week.

SUCH an Ascendancy had BENITO gained over her, that quite forgetting the Insult he had offer'd her Daughter, or, what one would think should more alarm her, the Love-Affair that had been carried on between them, she took him with her, when she went to celebrate LIBERTINA'S Nuptials: Though my Lady could not see the ill Consequences of throwing one in the Way of a young Miss, on whom she

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she had fix'd her first Affection ; yet I plainly foresaw that as soon as LIBERTINA beheld him, the stifl'd Flame would break out with more Vehemence than ever, and I concluded that nothing less than Adultery would be the first Crime she committed after Marriage, if the Sight of him did not entirely prevent her Wedding ; but in this last Conjecture I was disappointed, for she did not happen to know he was there 'till the Day after the Ceremony was perform'd, and then she met him by Accident, as she cross'd the great Hall. She was observ'd to be very melancholy all the Morning, and none of that Alacrity of Spirits which is usually seen in Brides after the Pleasures of the Bridal Night shone in her Eyes ; she plainly shew'd that she was very much dissatisfied with the Choice they had made for her in an Husband, and any one that was as well acquainted with her Constitution and Temper

per as I was, might have read in her Looks, that she was determin'd to do herself Right the first Opportunity that offer'd; for her Complexion is truly amorous, and the Constellation of the Sea-born Goddess presided so powerfully at her Birth, that she could not withstand the tender Emotions that assaulted her, or the Love that wanton'd in every Vein: And if, as has been reported, her Expectations were not answer'd in the genial Bed, and the nuptial Torch burnt dim and faint, it cannot be imagin'd, that one like her who always scorn'd Constraint, and obey'd no Power but her own Will, would be long without gratifying an Inclination which stimulated her to experience the soft Endearments of a kind Embrace; especially when the Fates, to punish Don DANDIN for monopolizing so much Youth and Beauty in his feeble Arms, flung in her Way a brisk, active Lover, who
had

had long before gain'd the Dominion of her Heart, and at a Time when her disappointed Love stung her with the warmest Resentment.

SHE started at the Sight of him, and a Crimson Blush spread all her Face; BENITO perceiv'd it, and being willing to improve the lucky Minute, bow'd very obsequiously, and wish'd her Joy: "Joy, said she, in a low Voice, is what I must never expect in this House, it is well if I can find Ease, but let me see you BENITO in my Chamber Half an Hour hence, and make some Excuse to the Family that you may not be enquir'd after, for I have a great deal to say to you." He bow'd, and seem'd as if he would reply, but she bade him be gone then, and do as she had commanded him.

SHE

SHE was so indifereet in this, and so flush'd with Transport at seeing her Lover, that she took no Precaution before she spoke to him, nor consulted whether any one overheard her or not, and it was lucky for her that nobody was near but myself, for I was in an Antichamber, and could distinguish every Word she said. I was strangely perplex'd how to behave in this Affair, I was sorry for Don DANDIN, for I imagin'd what would be the Consequence of this Interview; I was likewise griev'd that a young Lady should precipitate herself into such a Labyrinth of Trouble, as an Amour of this Kind must occasion, and which it was almost impossible to keep secret long. I thought my Duty to LAURA oblig'd me to acquaint her with it, and I was once or twice in the Mind to go instantly and inform her of it, but when I reflected how ill I had
been

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been treated for once before preventing her yeilding up her Person to this very Man, I determin'd not to concern myself about it, but let them proceed as they thought proper.

HOWEVER, Ladies, I must here confess to you a Piece of my own Weakness, my female Curiosity would not let me rest, and I could not refrain from prying more narrowly into this Adventure. I was consulting which was the properest Way to put my Design in Execution, when LAURA sent for me, and telling me the young Lady was quite fatigued with Dancing the Night before, and other Diversions that are customary at such Solemnities, and having the Head Ach to a great Degree had begg'd to be excused for an Hour or two that she might repose herself, she therefore order'd me to go and see how she did, and if she wanted any Assistance.

BUT

BUT when I came to her Chamber I might have spar'd myself the Trouble ; for she had undrest herself, and was lain upon the Bed, in a languishing melting Condition, the Window Curtains were drawn, so that there was but just Light enough to distinguish her Beauties, which were display'd in a most wanton Manner, she had no Petticoats on, only a loose Robe de Chambre carelessly thrown over her, which as she turn'd herself round had accidentally flew open, and left only the transparent Lawn to shade her lovely Limbs, which but badly conceal'd the many Beauties Nature had bestow'd on her ; I could not help blushing at the Ideas which this tempting Scene rais'd, and delivering my Message, waited her Answer impatiently that I might be gone.-----

“ She thank'd my Lady for her
“ Tendernefs, and order'd me to

P

“ tell

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“ tell her, that she only wanted a
 “ little Rest to recruit her exhausted
 “ Spirits, and found herself inclina-
 “ ble to Sleep; therefore she desir’d
 “ that nobody might be suffer’d to
 “ disturb her for a Couple of Hours,
 “ and that then she should be re-
 “ fresh’d sufficiently, and would join
 “ the Company again.”

I WENT out, she got up and fasten’d the Door after me, and then I had an Opportunity of slipping into the Room adjoining to the Chamber, in which I found a Closet, through a Crevice in which, I could perceive all that pass’d in her Room, and could then hear her sigh and say to herself: “ My dear BENITO! if
 “ thou art but still the same ardent
 “ Lover as my fond Fancy once re-
 “ presented thee, I may yet be hap-
 “ py, and be aveng’d for the Insults
 “ offer’d me by a capricious impotent
 “ Husband.”

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I FIX'D upon this Place for my Ambuscade, and made Haste down to deliver my Message that I might the sooner get to it, and if possible before BENITO came. When I told LAURA what the young Lady said, it occasion'd a Smile in the whole Company, and several merry Repartees upon Don DANDIN for saying: "Ah! poor Soul, let her rest, for she had none last Night." And I could not help smiling myself, but it was to see him sitting so contentedly over his Bottle, whilst there were such Transactions going forward above Stairs, which would have been but little to his Satisfaction had he known it.

HOWEVER, I was very well pleas'd to see the Company employ'd in several Parties in different Amusements, some of the boon Gentlemen were deeply engag'd with Don DAN-

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DIN at their Claret; others of them and the Ladies were sat down to Cards, amongst whom was LAURA; so that there was no Danger of my being call'd for some Time, and I had the better Opportunity of prosecuting my Discovery; for which Purpose I got up to the Closet as fast as I could, and having conceal'd myself and fasten'd the Door, I waited the Event with Impatience.

I HAD not been there long before the expecting Lover came to his Appointment, the Scene that pass'd is too luxuriant to be express'd, and can be much better conceiv'd than mention'd: Let it suffice to say, that her Charms display'd in the Manner they then were, would have tempted a Man less amorous than BENITO, and she with a kind languishing Look took him by the Hand, and throwing off all the Pride and Reserve of her Birth, and new-acquir'd Dignity,

gave

gave him to understand that he had nothing to fear from that Quarter.--- He stood for some Time to contemplate her Beauties, which were rather improv'd than diminish'd since he had seen her in the Grove, but as he was a Person not to be satisfied with small Matters, he soon put himself in a Disposition to obtain greater Favours. Weak, or rather none at all, Heaven knows, was the Resistance which *LIBERTINA* made on this Occasion; but as Modesty will permit me to go no farther, the rest I must leave to your Conjecture, only this I can assure you, that all Circumstances prov'd *DANDIN*'s Deficiency, and gave this favour'd Footman the Prize which ought to have been the Husband's Bridal Conquest; for tho' *Hymen* had made the *Bonds* the Day before, Love did not fix the Seal till now; and the tender Conflict plainly shew'd for whom the precious Rose-Bud had reserv'd its opening Sweets.

THEIR Transports ended, in all Probability they were not dissatisfied with each other, because their Conversation lasted full the Time that she had taken to repose in, and the happy Lover was but just gone down, when LAURA not finding me came up to wake her; when she got up to open the Door, tho' her Head-dress was a little disorder'd, she had such a lovely Vermeille on her Cheeks, that in my Life I never saw her look so beautiful as I did then, and by this Time her Vapours and Head-ach were gone, so that she dress'd herself immediately, and went down to the rest of the Company.

WHEN LIBERTINA had once tasted the Sweets of Love, she was still unsated with the luscious Banquet, the Frequency of Enjoyment did not abate the ardent Passion of her or her Gallant; and when she
was

was in full Possession of the beloved Object, she found some hidden Beauties which drew all her Affections to him; for several Interviews such as this succeeded one another, which increased their mutual Tenderneſs to ſuch Degree, that one would have really thought their Paſſion would have been as laſting as Life; but that was almoſt impoſſible to one who was employ'd to do double Duty, as BENITO was, for tho' LIBERTINA could not be ſurfeited, yet his Strength might be exhausted,

THOUGH the Labour of drudging in the firſt Trammels of Love might be too hard for the gouty diſeaſed DON DANDIN to undergo, yet it was thought when once the Collar was fitted to his Neck that he trotted on in his Geers pretty chearfully, and it was no unpleaſant Thing to me who knew the whole Adventure, to hear him brag of his Manhood, and

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put the poor Lady to the Blush, by telling his amorous Feats ; but *LIBERTINA*, as she had enter'd so far into the dear delusive Sin of stolen Pleasure, added every other Crime that was necessary to support it ; she was a perfect Mistress in the Art of Hypocrisy, and manag'd her Affairs with such a Circumspection that the deceiv'd Don believ'd her to be one of the best Wives in the World, and grew doatingly fond of her ; and as a Proof of the Ascendancy she had over him, she set him to apply to *LAURA* that *BENITO* might have Leave to stay with her, under Pretence, that as all Don *DANDIN*'s Servants were Strangers to her, she might have one in the Family that she was acquainted with. The Mother was extremely surpriz'd at this unexpected Request, but the *Don* insisting on it very strenuously, according to the Instructions given him by his Spouse, she was at last oblig'd to consent,

consent, to obviate any Suspensions that might otherwise arise of herself; but she by this plainly fathom'd the Depth of her Daughter's Inclination, and could not help smiling to herself to see how earnestly the Husband solicited his own Cuckoldom.

THO' LAURA could not avoid BENITO's staying with his young Lady, yet she did not know that Matters had been carried to such an Height as they really had, and therefore as the Daughter had thus cunningly contriv'd her Scheme, the Mother much better vers'd in Intrigue than her, determin'd to counterplot her, and recollecting that I had been very officious in detecting their first Intrigue, she resolv'd to make an Offer of my continuing there as her Woman, that I might be a Sort of a Check upon their Proceedings, and accordingly told her before her Husband, " that it would be irksome for
" her

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“ her to have no Servants whom she
“ knew about her, and therefore, as
“ she had desir’d her Footman, she
“ would likewise, if she pleas’d,
“ leave her Woman to wait on
“ her.”

LIBERTINA did by no Means relish a Proposal of this Sort, but as it would have been rude to deny her, she was oblig’d to give her Assent, and the Family Affairs being thus settled, LAURA did not continue much longer at their Villa, but what contributed to her Departure more suddenly than otherwise she would have chose, was an Accident that convinc’d her of LIBERTINA’s being grown a downright abandon’d Adulterers, and which was but a Consequence that might reasonably be expected to follow from her having desir’d BENITO’s Continuation in the Family. LAURA went up to the Dressing-Room one Afternoon,
and

and found the two Lovers in such a Posture as was a plain Indication of the Transports they had been giving each other; tir'd with acting their Joys they were both fallen fast asleep, and twin'd in all the wanton Folds of Love: They had so wearied themselves with Delight, that when they clos'd their Eyes they had not Power left to drop the Curtain over the soft Scene they had been representing: One of his Arms lay under her Head, and the other, as if loath to quit the Fountain of all its Bliss, was carelessly spread to guard it from any Insult that might be offer'd, whilst her's seem'd still to retain a Sense of the Pleasure she had receiv'd, and with an eager Grasp vindicated her Right to the Source from whence it issued. -- Her Alabaster Limbs were twin'd round his more manly ones, like wanton Ivy round the sturdy Oak, and afforded a luxurious Contraste, whilst his Head reclin'd upon her

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her snowy Breast, gently heav'd up and down, as they by the soft Pleasure rose or fell.

L A U R A stood astonish'd at this shocking Sight, for tho' she expected her Daughter would make herself happy with her Man, yet she could not have imagin'd that she had proceeded so far already; besides that she shudder'd for her, to think what would one Day be the Consequence of her fatal Indiscretion and Carelessness, for the Door stood so invitingly open, that any one might have found them in this Posture as well as L A U R A, and the Don who was now grown very fond of her, and was continually daddling after her wherever she went, would have been as likely as any Body, if it had not happen'd that this very Morning he was attack'd by a severe Fit of the Gout.

L A U R A

L A U R A was standing over them considering whether she should wake them or not, when I came up. When I enter'd the Room I would have drawn back, for indeed I was heartily ashamed to see such a Sight, but she beckon'd me in: " See, said she, " in what a pretty Condition your " Lady lies! It is, as I expected, " and you are likely to have a fine " Time of it, but for my Sake let " this be a Secret, and you shall be " well rewarded. I will try, if it is " yet possible to reclaim her, or at " the worst if she will indulge her " Appetites, to make her take a little Care of her Reputation; --- so " prithee! wake the abandon'd " Wretches, and send LIBERTINA " to my Apartment, where I'll read " her such a Lecture shall make her " Heart ach.

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I OBEY'D her, though the Office was very disagreeable to me. And sure never any poor Wretch was in in such Confusion as BENITO, when I awak'd him; had LAURA continued there, I dare believe, he would have swoon'd away, for he could scarce speak a plain Word to me, but gathering up his disorder'd Cloaths, as well as he could, run away stoutly; LIBERTINA was at first very angry with me for intruding thus upon her Privacy without Leave, but when I acquainted her that her Mother had been there, and had seen her in that Condition, and that I was order'd to wake her, and send her to LAURA's Apartment, she began to speak more gently to me and desire, that since I had seen what had pass'd, I would take no notice, and she would endeavour to make my Service more comfortable to me than I expected: Notwithstanding this, I could by no Means

Means think of living in a Family where there was such continual Uneasiness as I foresaw there would be in this, and would have quitted it immediately, had not LAURA strictly injoin'd me to the contrary, and my Obligations to her had been too great, even from my very Infancy that I durst not disobey her.

WHEN LIBERTINA was in LAURA'S Room I heard them at high Words, but did not care to go near them for fear of giving Offence, 'till I was call'd, and then as I enter'd, I heard the young Lady express herself, as I thought very oddly to her Mother: "Madam, said she, I would
" have you to know, that I am now
" too young to be tutor'd, and call'd
" to Account like a Baby, I am now
" old enough to be capable of an-
" swering for my own Conduct, and
" as the Husband you have prick'd
" out for me, has elevated me to a
" Rank,

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“Rank, even superior to your own,
“I shall always behave in a Manner
“suitable to my Dignity in all Re-
“spects; so, no more of your jea-
“lous Reproofs, my dear Mamma.”

At these last Words, she flung out of the Room in a Passion, and it was well for her that she did, or otherwise I don't know but LAURA had been so far transported with Rage beyond the Bounds of Reason as to have struck her.

HOWEVER, she was so offended at the Insolence of her Daughter that she vow'd she would not stay another Night in the House, and order'd her Chariot to be made ready to carry her home, and the young Lady, who was determin'd to give a full Scope to her Pleasures, shew'd herself as well skill'd in Intrigue, as if she had been a well-bred Town-Mistress from her Cradle, and to speak Truth, it did run in her Blood, for she ment
imme-

immediately to her Husband, and made up such a plausible Story to him of her Mother's ill Treatment, that he suffer'd LAURA to take a cold Farewel of him, without pressing her to stay, or enquiring into the Cause of her abrupt Departure.

THUS WAS LIBERTINA left at her own Disposal, to indulge herself in all criminal Excesses, to which her Spouse's Disorder contributed not a little, for his Gout encreased to such a Degree that she was oblig'd to part Beds, for fear of incommoding him. As she knew I had been once privy to her Intrigue, she made no Scruple of what she said or did before me; and BENITO found Means to be her Companion every Night: "I
" frequently represented to her the
" Hazard she run in being thus
" venturesome, telling her that the
" rest of the Servants began to take
" Notice of the particular Favours
Q " she

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“ she heap’d on her Gallant, and
 “ that if she was not more circum-
 “ spect for the future, it could not
 “ long remain a Secret, and that I
 “ dreaded the fatal Consequences
 “ that would ensue. I reminded her
 “ of the Don’s passionate Temper,
 “ and painted to her the Horrors of
 “ the Tragick Scene that would be
 “ acted, when he should come to
 “ know, as sooner or later he must,
 “ in what Manner she had wrong’d
 “ his Bed, that if she escap’d with
 “ Life, whilst her Lover was laid
 “ weltring in his Gore at her Feet,
 “ it would be more than she could
 “ well expect.” But all this did not
 move her a Jot, and she only re-
 plied: “ That I was a silly Wench,
 “ and did not know the Prerogative
 “ of a Woman of Quality.”

WHEN I found all I could urge
 was ineffectual, I wrote to LAURA
 to know, how I should behave in
 this

this critical Conjunction, and to desire that I might have her Leave to quit the Service, but she would not consent to that, persuading me to hold out a little longer, and she did not doubt, but LIBERTINA's natural Inconstancy would relieve me, for that, in a few Months, she would be as tir'd of BENITO as she was then fond of him: And this was literally verified, for the poor Fellow was wasted to a mere Skeleton: His Legs were hardly able to sustain him, and any one might perceive, that he was going into a deep Consumption. It was then that the Variety of her Temper began to work, he was not suffer'd to come near her; he could do no one Thing to please her, and she could not so much as endure the Sight of him; so that the unhappy Wretch was glad to get his Discharge, in order to procure his Ease.

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I OWN that I was extremely re-
joic'd when he went away, and that
she had hitherto escap'd without Dis-
covery, and I was in Hopes that she
had taken her full Swing of Love, and
would now confine herself to her
Husband, without seeking after any
more Intrigues; but alas! I was
greatly mistaken: She was of a
Complexion too amorous, and had
too much of the Coquet in her for
one Man to satisfy her Desires. BE-
NITO's Love was grown habitual to
her, her Husband's she thought quite
nauseous, and her frequent Absence
from his Bed on Account of his In-
disposition, left a void Space in her
Heart, and was far from being grate-
ful to one of her Inclinations. She
thought, that if she attended him
whilst he was in Health, he had no
Reason to complain; and that to
make herself Amends for the Time
he

he was ill, she might be allow'd to find out some other Amusement.

WITH these Principles she set out every where dispensing tender and amorous Glances, and listening to such flattering Tongues, as stuck not to tell her that she was quite the finest Woman of the Villa; that none could look on her without being in Love, and that since it was in her Power to make many happy, it was a publick Injustice to confine herself to one, and these Discourses falling in with the Bent of her Desires, and the Consciousness of the Power of her Charms, were all thought true, and accordingly made Impressions upon her.

NOTWITHSTANDING her Gaiety of Temper, and Wantonness of her Disposition, not one of her Butterfly Admirers dar'd to attack her in Form, for fear of the Resentment of Don DANDIN; for conscious of his own

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Inability he began to be more watchful of her Behaviour; yet I don't know how it was, though she was very careless and negligent in her Amours, she was so favour'd by Fortune that she had escap'd all Discovery hitherto. But, in her next Adventure, she run a greater Risque than ever.

FINDING that she could not conveniently have an Intrigue with any Body in High Life, she resolv'd to court more vulgar Pleasures; for as she had once tasted of the forbidden Fruit, she seem'd resolv'd to gorge herself even to a Surfeit. Adultery must certainly be a very tempting Sin, for by all the Observations I have made when a Wife once gives a Loose to her vicious Inclinations, she is rarely, or ever reclaim'd.

THUS LIBERTINA, before the Remembrance of BENITO was well cold

cold in her Heart, burn'd with a lawless Desire for ADAMIO, her Husband's Gardiner. The Fellow was a healthy lusty Country Clown, and if LIBERTINA had been the least delicate in her Amours, she could not have found any Thing in him to charm her; but her Constitution is certainly very different from other Women, and she was continually praising his robust manly Presence, as she stil'd it, and the wholesome Ruddiness of his Cheeks. I trembl'd with the Apprehension of this new Difficulty she was going to involve herself in, but knowing that she was not to be check'd in her Pursuit of Lust, I thought it would be in vain to say any Thing to her about it, and therefore resolv'd to let her go on as she would, and keep myself entirely out of the Scrape. I seem'd to take no Notice of all that she could urge in Behalf of her new Passion, which she taking for Insensibility in me, de-

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termin'd to make herself happy at all Events.

SHE was on this Occasion, all of a sudden, grown very fond of Gardening, and would walk there several Hours together, though till that Time she had scarce so much as taken a View of the Ground belonging to the Mansion, which was very spacious, and dispos'd in an elegant Taste: She alter'd whole Walks, and was continually making one Alteration or another, only to give her an Opportunity of conversing with ADAMIO, whom she gave to understand by several little careless Extravagancies, that a vigorous Return of Passion would not be disagreeable to her. The Fellow, who was of a Nation fam'd for Assurance and Heroism in the Feats of Love, was not backward to take her friendly Hints, and improv'd them by carelessly, on Purpose,

Purpose, discovering to her a Specimen of his Abilities.

THE Don indulg'd her in the *innocent* Amusement, as he thought, of Gardening; and when he was able to hobble so far, would now-and-then pay her a Visit, to see the Improvements she had made; but this was not at all agreeable to her Designs, and his Illness did not suffer him to trouble her much.

AFTER she had receiv'd ocular Demonstrations of ADAMIO's Accomplishments for the tender Struggles of Love, she burn'd with Impatience to obtain a Consummation of her Desires.

THERE was at the Bottom of the Garden a Bath built after the ancient Taste, and furnish'd in a most expensive Manner. Here several Day-Beds were set up for the Convenience

cy of the Bathers, and over these, ADAMIO had an Apartment for himself: This Place she pitch'd upon to confer the second Honour on the unhappy DANDIN, and establish him more firmly in the Forked Order; for all her Longings were now for an Heir, and ADAMIO was destin'd to be the happy Person to supply her Wants. He had the Care of these Baths, and having order'd him to get one ready for her the Night before, she rose early in the Morning, before any of the Family were stirring, attired only in a loose Night-Gown. I attended her thither, and having put her in the Bath she commanded me to withdraw, and come to her three or four Hours afterwards, for that she should repose herself a little after she was tir'd with Bathing. I guess'd perfectly well what her Intentions were, and accordingly withdrew; though I am since convinc'd that she must certainly have made Overtures to the
Fel-

Fellow, or he could never have had the Boldness to do as he did; for I had scarce got an Hundred Yards from the Place, when I saw A D A M I O come down in an Undress, and enter the Bath: She herself let him in, all nak'd as she was; and I leave any one to conjecture, what must follow such an Interview as this.

I N short, their Embraces were attended with greater Success than BERNITO's, and she prov'd with Child: Nobody could be fonder or more indulgent than the Don when he discover'd it; and I often us'd to pity the mistaken Kindness of the poor Gentleman, when he has been more than ordinarily careful about her Health, and anxious lest any Accidents should befall her.

T H E Season of the Year, though by some reckon'd to be in the Decay was very pleasant; the Landscapes
were

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were beautiful, and more entertaining to the Eye than when they are crowded with the Multiplicity of Nature's Products; there was more Variety in the Colour of the Leaves, the Prospects began to open through the thinner Woods over the Vallies; and through the high Canopies of the Trees to the higher Arch of Heaven. The Dews of the Morning impearl'd every Thorn, and scatter'd Diamonds on the verdant Mantle of the Earth; the Weather being so very fine contributed very much to the Don's recovering his Health, and enabl'd him to walk abroad: I now trembled for fear of my unhappy Mistress, and every Moment expected to hear of a Discovery being made; for she could not refrain from visiting the Garden as often as ever; and a Circumstance then happen'd, which but for her own peculiar Management had betray'd her much sooner than she was.

AD-

ADJOINING to DON DANDIN's Garden, an old superannuated Cuff had a Villa, where he liv'd retir'd from the World, the ill Usage which he had receiv'd from the Fair Sex in his Youth, made him resolve to live and die a Batchelor. CELIBIO, as we will call him, had conceiv'd a most inflexible Antipathy to every thing female, and having nothing else to employ himself, he spent his whole Time in discovering the Secrets of his Neighbours, and publishing their Faults ; yet had he an insinuating Way which made him very great with the Husbands, though he was detested by all the Women round the Country ; for wherever he came, he was continually raising Suspicions, and Doubts of their Conduct. The old Man had paid a Visit to DON DANDIN, and beginning something of that Kind there, LIBERTINA affronted him very grossly ; he seem-

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seemed not to heed it much then, but the Consequence shew'd that he secretly vow'd Revenge. He had a Terrace in his Garden, which overlook'd Part of our's, and from thence he had often descried LIBERTINA, in Conference with the Gardener, allowing him more Liberties than he thought was consistent with her Honour; and from which he did not doubt, but that if he watch'd her, he should make further Discoveries; accordingly she never went there, but he lay perdue to observe her. He could not indeed see the Bathing House, for that was at too great a Distance from him, but she was now grown so bold in her Adventures that she did not confine herself to that Place alone, but every Grass Plat, every Arbour, and every flow'ry Bed was conscious of their Thefts of Love; she was so indiscreet, to let this old Sophister be Witness to their Endearments on a Bank just underneath

neath his Terrace, and he saw ADAMIO, revelling in his Lady's Arms, with a secret Pleasure that he now had it in his Power to revenge the Insults she had given him, and ruin her with her Husband.

LIBERTINA, was so absorb'd in Love, that she had not Leisure to see CELIBIO, till it was too late, and then, sensible of the Error she had committed, by a lucky Turn of Thought, she found an Expedient to set aside the ill Effects of his Malice; she order'd ADAMIO, to go out immediately, and by getting into some Company in the Town, endeavour to convince them, that he had not been at home all that Afternoon. This she did in Case the old Fellow should, as she expected complain to her Husband, that her Favourite Swain might have an Opportunity of vindicating himself;

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self; and as to her own part, she took the following Method: She went immediately to her Husband, and inviting him to take a Walk with her, she led him to the same Place where she had so lately been happy, and assuming a more than ordinary Gaiety of Humour, by a thousand fond Caresses and false Endearments she rais'd his languid Flame to such a Height, that he could not avoid gratifying his impotent Desire. This was all she wanted, and she now thought herself secure, let the Mischief Maker come as soon as he would.

CELIBIO, was so transported with the spiteful Discovery he had made, that, not expecting any such thing, he did not stay for the Repetition of the Scene, but resolv'd within himself, the next Morning to open the whole Affair with its most flagrant Circumstances before the injur'd

jur'd Husband. I did not then know the Reason, but was surprized to see my Lady shew much more Tender-ness and Fondness to her Husband that Evening than ever she had done before, and he really gave her so much Encouragement to continue it, that I perceived from that Moment, it was her own Fault, if she was not the happiest Woman in the World. They supp'd, and afterwards went to Bed together, which was the first Time I had ever seen her do so without Repining or Reluctance.

IN the Morning, the Make-bate came to Breakfast, fully perswaded that he was arm'd with sufficient Proofs to make the Mischief he intended, whilst my Lady was present he could not help flinging ill-natur'd Sneers and Reflections at her, but when she was withdrawn, he related what he had seen with the most aggravating Circumstances. He was

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amaz'd

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amaz'd to see the Don bear it so patiently, and only smiling at his whole important Secret. At last, CELIBIO very much irritated that his Malice had not taken the desir'd Effect, ask'd him, " If he was quite insensible, or if he had given Consent to it? " — " Neither, replies Don DANDIN, but I can't help laughing to see what Pains you take to convince me of a Thing I know to be false, for it was not the Gardener, but myself that you saw in the Position you mention." — " Zounds! Sir, says CELIBIO, do you take me for an Ass, and do you imagine, that I have not my Eye-sight, or are you determin'd to be enter'd into the Rank of contented Cuckolds? For I tell you that I am not to be deceiv'd, and that you were not there, but the Gardener and your Wife was making the Beast with two Backs." — " Zounds!

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“ Zounds! says Don DANDIN, I
“ tell you again, it was I myself.”

THEY continu'd thus contradict-
ing each other for above Half an
Hour, till at length the Don being
quite exasperated call'd his Servants
to turn the Incendiary that dar'd to
dispute his Wife's Virtue out of Doors,
amongst the rest ADAMIO made one,
and it is not to be doubted but the
poor Wretch was severely handled;
and he was so sick of his ill Usage,
that he never ventur'd to come near
the House again, during our Stay
there.

LIBERTINA exulted prodigious-
ly in this Conquest, and so fond was
she of her Triumph, that she could
not help in the Fulness of her Heart
unravelling the whole Mystery to me.
I begg'd her to have a stricter Guard
upon her Conduct for the future, and
take Care not to reduce herself any

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more to such dangerous Dilemma's. But it was in vain, and Fate had doom'd her to become a Victim of her Passions, and she was carried on by an irresistible Impulse of Love, that she could not by any Means preserve her Reputation, which too many Ladies, equally as culpable as her in private, are cunning enough to keep unfulfilled to the public View.

BUT my Lady was none of these, for she at last grew so secure, upon the Strength of her last Victory over CELIBIO, that she did not care who saw the Privileges she allow'd her Gardener, vainly imagining her Lord would be always the same easy Fool, but she was very much disappointed, and at last betray'd herself in the very Place where she first commenc'd her Amour with him. She was sitting with ADAMIO there one Day, his Arm was round her Neck, and he was embracing her very tenderly, when

when Don DANDIN happen'd to pass that Way : He was so shock'd at the Sight, that at first he could scarce give Credit to his Eyes, and would willingly have thought it all Illusion, but it was too plain to admit of Dispute. He obey'd the first Impulse of his Rage, and bouncing into the Room upon them, drew his Sword, and had sheath'd it in the Bowels of the Aggrieving Lover, if she had not interpos'd and prevented his Fury. His Arm, which was lifted up to execute Vengeance on the Wretch that had dishonour'd his Bed, stopp'd short when he saw her step in between, and he flung out of the Room in an Agony, and only said : " Oh LIBERTINA ! thou hast " undone thyself and me."

DON DANDIN from that Moment determin'd to part with her, but as he could not produce sufficient Proofs to obtain a Divorce, he

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was oblig'd to content himself with a bare Separation, which he soon after did, but previous to that, and that the Affair might not make a Noise in the Country, he brought her up to Town, and there her Affairs were settled as privately as they possibly could be: In short, the Don behav'd in a very generous Manner, for he not only gave her all her Jewels and Equipage, but allow'd her *Five Thousand* a Year, and instead of being chagrin'd at this, which would have shock'd any Woman but herself; but on the contrary, it gave her more Spirits than ordinary. And she has often declar'd that she thought the Day of her Separation much happier than those of her Nuptials.

WE may, by this Example, form an Idea how uncomfortable those Marriages must be where Affection has no Share in the Union; Riches and Pomp are not the Charms of
Love,

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Love, true Tenderness makes us separate the Lover from all that is external to him, and setting aside his Quality, Fortune and Employments consider him singly by himself.

It is not Love, but the Desire of Riches and Honours that makes Women run into the Embraces of an indolent Husband, Ambition not Affection forms such Marriages. I believe indeed they may be follow'd with some Advantages and Honours, but I can never think that it is the Way to enjoy the Pleasures of an affectionate Union, nor to feel those secret and charming Emotions of Hearts, which have long strove to be united. These Martyrs of Marriage pine always for larger Fortunes, which they think they have lost; the Wife sees Husbands richer than her own, and the Husband Wives better portion'd than his. Their interested Vows occasions Regret, and Regret produces

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Hatred, they soon part, or always desire it. This restless and tormenting Passion punishes them for aiming at other Advantages by Love than Love itself.

BUT if there is any Thing which may be call'd Happiness here below, I am persuaded it is the Union of two Persons who love each other with perfect Liberty, who are united by a secret Inclination, and satisfied with each other's Merit; their Hearts are full, and leave no Vacancy for any other Passion; they enjoy perpetual Tranquillity, because they enjoy Content.

BUT this was what LIBERTINA could never know, for her Thoughts were ever roving, wild and unsettled. It might have been imagin'd, that when she was parted from her Husband, she would have been contented with ADAMIO, but Satiety had there

there too taken Place, and when she could have his Company without running any Risque for it, she grew tir'd of him. However she lay in, and though the Don was thoroughly convinc'd that the Child was spurious, yet as he was not able to controvert the Legitimacy of it, he let it pass unheeded.

THE Delights of the Town inspired her with a Desire of making new Conquests, and unhappily for ASTERIA, PHILOCELL was the Man she first singl'd out; she had heard that he was young and full of Vigour, she lov'd Laughing, and Mirth, and he was naturally pleasant and facetious, Diversion was all her Aim, and he was all over Gaiety and Joy: In short, a brisk and sprightly Conversation was what took with her, and his Fancy was so fruitful, and the Sallies of his Wit so surprizingly pleasant, that wherever he was
there

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there could be no languishing, or growing dull. Nothing was ever seen more comely or amiable than his Person; besides that, he was easy, polite and complaisant in Company, was full of Flattery, and had a Way of expressing himself which pleased much, and gave a Kind of Poignancy and Relish to all he said: In short, he was an Epidemical Distemper amongst the Ladies, and few that saw him could escape being in Love with him; but to their great Disappointment he was at that Time very fond of his Lady, and I don't know but this might pique LIBERTINA's Pride as much as any thing, for she had a particular Alacrity at surmounting Difficulties.

BUT, I should acquaint you that her Intrigue with PHILOCELL began before she was absolutely parted from her Husband, and whilst the Writ-
ings

ings in order for their Separation were preparing.

THE first Time she had a Sight of him was at the Opera, he chanced to be in one of the Boxes over against her, and having cast his Eyes, as his Custom was, round about every Place, he fix'd them at last upon the Box, where my Lady was, with such Earnestness as if he were never to be satisfied with looking at her: And she in Return to his Attention never once took her Eyes off him, as long as the Entertainment lasted; they both perceived that they had a mutual Pleasure in looking at one another; and if LIBERTINA found that PHILOCELL was not flatter'd in the most advantageous Picture, her Fancy could draw of him, he on his Part gave Indications enough that he was captivated and charmed with her Beauty. In a Word from that Moment they fell in

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in Love with one another, even to a Folly.

IT was not long before I perceiv-
ed this new Passion of my Lady, for
upon her Return from the *Opera*, she
talk'd of nothing but PHILOCELL,
and twenty Times in a Quarter of an
Hour told me, that to her thinking
he was one of the most amiable Per-
sons in the World, and I learnt after-
wards that he did nothing but praise
her Charms and Beauty.

Y o u may easily imagine, that
there wanted not much Time to form
an Intrigue between Persons that were
so prepossess'd in each others Favour;
and accordingly in seven or eight Days
the Affair was concluded. In this
short Interval, PHILOCELL saw my
Lady two or three Times, and then
entertain'd her with such gallant and
passionate Discourses, to which she
made him Answers so very obliging,
that

that being no Novice in Love he could not but perceive, that she would not be hard-hearted, and therefore he resolv'd to send her a Letter, desiring Permission to come and pay her a Visit in her own House, which ran in these Terms.

*To the FAIR OBJECT of my tender
Wishes.*

Divine Creature!

“ I Think myself so particularly
“ interested in every Thing
“ that concerns You, that upon this
“ Score I take the Liberty of writing
“ unto You, to let You know that
“ I have some Things to impart to
“ You, but not so proper to be com-
“ mitted to Paper, which are of the
“ last Consequence for You to know:
“ Permit me, therefore, to wait on
“ You,

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" You, at Your House, that when
 " You are inform'd of what I have
 " to tell You, You may determine
 " Yourself as You think proper, I
 " am very well aware that you are
 " at present oblig'd to keep Measures
 " with a certain Person; and there-
 " fore if You'll grant me the Favour
 " I request, I will come to Your
 " House in Woman's Cloaths: You
 " may, without running any Risque,
 " allow me this Privilege, and I dare
 " venture to say, that I deserve it, as
 " being of all Men living,

Your most devoted Admirer,

PHILOCELL.

THO' LIBERTINA was very
 well pleas'd to find by reading this
 Letter, that PHILOCELL was so pres-
 sing to see her in private, yet for
 some Time she deliberated with her-
 self,

self, whether she should resolve to receive or refuse the Visit; the Hazard which she ran, in Case Don DANDIN should come to know that she saw a Man, whose Character and Address were enough to make the Fidelity, even of the most virtuous Woman suspected, persuaded her not to see him, but the Pleasure which she fancied to herself in an intimate Conversation with a Person, so lov'd, and belov'd by her, bore down all other Considerations; so that flattering herself, that the Don would know nothing of the Interview, she resolv'd to see PHILOCELL, and accordingly sent him this Answer.

To the Alluring PHILOCELL.

“ **T**HE Things of Consequence
“ which You tell me You
“ have to say to me, are enough to
“ raise my Curiosity; tho’ it is too
“ dange-

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" rous a Matter for a Woman to
 " have any private Conference with
 " You, who seem to me not incapa-
 " ble of making the most of Your
 " Advantages. It is well, however,
 " that You inform me, You intend
 " to come in Woman's Cloaths.-----
 " This gives me some Confidence in
 " You, and I hope You will prove
 " what You seem to be. Above all,
 " take Care to disguise Yourself well,
 " for You cannot but be sensible,
 " what I have to apprehend in Case
 " the Don should discover that I see
 " You.

Your's, as You behave,

LIBERTINA.

PHILOCELL was highly delight-
 ed with the Permission that was given
 him, and fail'd not to make his Visit
 in the Manner that was agreed on:
 All

ALL the People of the House took him for one of my Lady's Friends; I was the only Person who was privy to the Secret, and as I had a great Curiosity to know the Conclusion of this Adventure, I had on purpose provided me a Place, where I could hear and see every thing, without being perceiv'd.

My Lady was set under a Canopy, to receive him over against a great Looking Glass; and after the first Complements where over they talked for some time of indifferent Matters, but not without discovering by the secret Language of their Eyes, some Part of their Desires. The pretended Woman more especially darted such passionate Glances upon the true one, as could not but give her to understand what a dangerous Adventure she was engag'd in.

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AT length to mention the Subject which gave Occasion to this Interview, or at last furnished a Pretence, for it, she said to her Gallant :
 " Well, Sir, tell me then what
 " those Things of great Consequence are, which it was not safe
 " for you to write ?" " Ah! what a
 " Question is that, says he, cannot
 " you easily imagine what they
 " were ? Look at yourself in that
 " Glass ; Can any Man behold you,
 " and not die for Love of you ?
 " The first Moment I saw you, I
 " was in Love with you ; Your
 " Charms afterwards ravish'd my
 " Senses ; your Wit and Humour,
 " and a thousand agreeable Things
 " which I at length discover'd in
 " you, bereav'd me of my Reason
 " quite." " I perceive by your Discourse, replied she, that your Wit
 " is not grown rusty by living in
 " the Country, and conversing with
 " Women,

“ Women, who as I am inform’d,
“ have no great Share of it them-
“ selves. It is a long Time that
“ PHILOCELL has had the sole
“ Power and Privilege to speak soft
“ Things to the Ladies, but all that
“ he says of this Kind we must not
“ admit as true, and therefore I re-
“ ceive your Complement just in the
“ same Manner that you intended it,
“ I mean in Jest.” “There is no jes-
“ ting with such a Person as you,
“ replied the amorous PHILOCELL,
“ if I have the Character of making
“ Addresses to every fine Woman,
“ yet you cannot but know, that
“ there was one whom I once lov’d
“ with so tender, so warm, and so
“ constant a Passion, that ’till I saw
“ you I thought nothing but Death
“ could extinguish it; let my Passi-
“ on then, make some Impression
“ on you, love the Man that adores
“ you, and by the Consequence you
“ shall know, that no one can love
S 2 “ like

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“ like me.” “ You are very pres-
 “ sing, replied she, do not you know
 “ what Engagements I am under ?
 “ What must become of me, if my
 “ Husband should perceive that I
 “ have an Affection for You” “ He
 “ shall know nothing, says PHILO-
 CELL, kneeling on his Knees be-
 fore her, and pressing her amo-
 rously, “ I’ll not see You till he is
 “ gone into the Country again, and
 “ will take such Care of my Con-
 “ duct that he shall know nothing
 “ of our Intrigue.” While he was
 running all this over, LIBERTINA
 look’d languishingly on him, and
 now-and-then let fall a Sigh. He
 on the other Hand, first began to
 take little Liberties, and thence pro-
 ceeded to greater, and the Resistance
 she made was not much : So that at
 length Matters were brought to such
 a Point, that I found it high time for
 me to retire, at least, I was not will-
 ing

ing to see with my own Eyes, the
Conclusion of the ROMANCE.

THEIR Conversation lasted for
above five Hours : At last they were
forced to part, and it was some
Time before they could meet again,
in which Interval, PHILOCELL
wrote her the following Letter.

“ How sad a Thing is it to be se-
“ parated from what one loves, and
“ how cruel to know, that at the
“ same Time it is in another’s Arms?
“ Never did I think, that you could
“ have inspir’d other Sentiments of
“ Tendernefs, than what we usually
“ feel for all the Women we love ;
“ but I own I am mistaken. The
“ Remembrance of the Beauties and
“ Charms I saw, and of what past
“ between us in our last Conversati-
“ on, holds me in such a Kind of
“ Extacy as I never knew before, in-
“ somuch that you are the only Per-

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“son I find that can fill the Desires
“of a delicate and voluptuous Lover.
“How strangely are you mistaken,
“when you apprehend any Levity
“in Me ! ’tis impossible with you
“to play the Hyppocrite in Love,
“at the Sight of you, all Wit and
“Eloquence is dumb, and the Heart
“only speaks, so that I can have no
“Thoughts of ever changing. Let
“me but know when the happy
“Moment will be, wherein I may
“convince you how much it is I
“love You.”

THIS Letter she was so taken with, that she read it over and over again ; How well does he write says she to me, and what Room have I to doubt his Sincerity ? ’Tis his Heart that speaks in this Letter ; for no Man that is not in Love, as much as he, could ever write in so passionate a Stile, and then she return’d him the following Answer.

“ Is

“ Is it true, my dear PHIL-
“ CELL, that you love me as
“ much as you say you do? If you
“ do, I repent not at all of what I
“ have done for your Sake: for to
“ tell you the Truth, you seem’d
“ to me so amiable in your female
“ Dress, that I could not forbear
“ shewing you all my Tenderness.
“ Yes, I love you, I speak it with-
“ out a Blush; and all the Happiness
“ of my Life, consists at present in
“ my being beloved by you. The
“ DON and I part to morrow for
“ good, I need say no more, only
“ that I die with Impatience to see
“ you again.

HEREUPON he came to see her a-
gain, with all the Joy and Eagerness
of a passionate Lover; and she was so
highly delighted with him that she
was continually dwelling upon his
Praise. ’Twas in vain for me to re-

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present the sad Consequence, this Intrigue might bring on her, in what she had to fear from the DON in Case he should find it out ; all I could say avail'd nothing : " What would you have me do ; said she, I find myself forc'd by an irresistible Power to love PHILOCELL, and am bound to follow the Influence of my Stars ? My Reason tells me sufficiently that I do wrong, but my Heart persuades me that I am in the Right. 'Tis not in our Power to love nothing but what we should ; the Motives of Interest, Fear and Gratitude are but feeble Arms to resist the Force of Love, and a Woman prepossessed by a new Passion is in no Condition to listen to those Rules of Duty, Decency and Custom wherewith Mankind desire to enslave us."

THE Caution wherewith these Lovers saw one another for a considerable

derable Time, hinder'd their Familiarity from being discover'd, but as it is a very difficult Point to keep the most secret Matters always conceal'd, A D A M I O soon found it out, and being fully convinc'd of his Mistress's Infidelity, conceiv'd so warm a Resentment against her, that he went to her, and not only loaded her with Reproaches, but threaten'd to tell her Husband every Thing, and deliver her into his Power.

T H I S put her in a terrible Fright, for she could conceive nothing so horrid and shameful, as to fall into the Hands of a Husband, whom she had so sensibly injur'd, and therefore she was resolv'd to run any Risque, rather than be reduced to that Extremity; so that she gave him a handsome Sum of Money, and pack'd him off.

AND,

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AND, I finding there was no Possibility of living quiet with her, sent her a handsome Letter to excuse my quitting her so abruptly, and came away into ASTERIA's Service, to which a Friend had before recommended me, all that I know more is that ever since our Retirement here, PHILOCELL has openly lived in Adultery with LIBERTINA, which has at length reached the DON's Ears, and he is determin'd to sue for a Divorce.

MARIANNE, had but just ended her Narration, when ASTERIA came up to them, and with her a Friend of her's who was just come from Town, and who being made privy to her Retreat had for some Time past watch'd the Motions of LIBERTINA, and her Gallant, and informed them this Affair was now come to a Conclusion.

DON

DON DANDIN, says he, being made sensible of his Wife's continuing in her Error, try'd all the Ways he could think of to catch her in the very Act of Adultery ; for besides that he wanted to get rid of her, he had another Lady in View, to whom he was engag'd in a Promise of Marriage, if he could obtain a Divorce from LIBERTINA ; and his Brother NOLLITTIO (who in Case the DON died without lawful Issue was next Heir to his Estate,) spirited him up to it as much as he could, in order to prove the Child which she had by ADAMIO illegitimate, as likewise one that she had by PHILOCELL, since their Separation.

THEY were so open in their Crimes, that it was no hard Matter to procure the necessary Proofs the Law requir'd, he had got on his Side the Midwife that laid her, who declar'd

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clar'd PHILOCELL's Tenderness for her in such a Manner that there was no Room to doubt their Intimacy; for that, after her lying in, her Milk curdled in her Breasts, and he was so anxious for her Welfare, that he would not suffer any one to draw them but himself. And further they were so far from being nice in their Amours, that once in the Country, when they rode out they made some Clowns, who were at Work in a Neighbouring Field, Witnesses to the soft Struggles of their Love through a Hedge.

ARM'D with these corroborating Proofs, the injur'd Husband ventur'd to bring his Cause before the Great SANHEDRIM; they were astonish'd at the flagrant Proofs he produc'd, and without Hesitation granted him a considerable Sum of Money from PHILOCELL for the Damages he had sustain'd,

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sustain'd, and fix'd on LIBERTINA the indelible Stain of ADULTERY, and made the unlawful Offspring, whom she had brought into the World, share in her Crimes; of which they were innocent by declaring them illegitimate. But a Piece of Generosity in DON DANDIN ought to be recorded, which shew'd that he had no avaritious Design in what he did, and only wanted to rid his Family of the Pest of a lewd Woman. He freely forgave PHILOCELI, the Sum in which he was cast, and has promised to shew no more Resentment on this Score.

T H U S we see the fatal Consequences of disagreeable Matches, and how prevalent is the Force of ill Examples, Adultery is look'd upon as venial, and by being countenanc'd by the Great is adopted by the Vulgar, LIBERTINA's Wealth raises her
above

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above Scandal, and makes her glory
in her Vice, whilst ASTERIA, who
is the only injur'd Person, is alone
unhappy.

F I N I S.



